Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-93-164
Thursday
26 August 1993

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FBIS-NES-93-164 *26 August 1993*

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Palestinian Affairs

PLO Financial Crisis Prompts 'Austerity Measures'

Negotiating Team Cut by Half

NC2508173493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1348 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Tunis, 25 Aug (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has decided to slash by half—that is, from 14 to 7—the number of Palestinian delegates to the bilateral peace talks, which are scheduled to resume in Washington next Tuesday [31 August]. This was done as part of the austerity policy the PLO is currently implementing.

A high-level Palestinian source said that the delegation will consist of Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the negotiating delegation; Sa'ib 'Urayqat, deputy head of the delegation; Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, official spokesperson of the delegation; and Faysal al-Husayni, head of the delegation's advisory committee. These will be the principal members of the delegation. Three other members will be chosen from among the remaining members of the delegation.

The source affirmed that the reduction of the delegation is not expected to negatively affect the work of the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations. He said that the Palestinian delegation will be assisted by a Palestinian cadre living in the United States which will provide administrative and advisory services to the delegation.

'Ashrawi Explains Decision

JN2608130393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 0930 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] A mini Palestinian delegation this morning left for Amman on its way to Tunis for talks. Before it departed, our correspondent 'Umar Zaydani, asked Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, the reason behind reducing the size of the Palestinian delegation.

[Begin recording] ['Ashrawi] The reason is purely practical. It is due to bad financial conditions and is part of the austerity measures. The delegation comprises a smaller number of members, but they are very qualified. We will do what is required despite the smaller number.

[Zaydani] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, it seems that the financial and political crisis inside the PLO sidelined the interest in the forthcoming round of peace talks?

['Ashrawi] Not at all. The financial crisis is a pressing issue that has come to the surface and affected many other issues. However, there are people charged with certain tasks and the delegation members and the officials responsible for managing the negotiating process work around the clock to prepare documents for the issues discussed at the negotiations. We are prepared for all eventualities.

[Zaydani] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, as you are well aware, some questions have been raised about the ability of the Palestinian delegation to hold negotiations under the current crisis, not only the financial, but also the political crisis inside the PLO.

['Ashrawi] These issues should not be exaggerated. There is, certainly, a financial crisis, and there are internal matters related to reforms that have been there for some time now. This happens in all institutions, particularly the democratic ones, which exercise self criticism and conduct internal reforms in a responsible manner. What is happening now is an attempt to renew and revive institutions that are facing major problems caused by the financial crisis. We feel the PLO can overcome these problems and tackle them in a responsible way. The PLO is, basically, the Palestinian people's representative. It also represents the national dimension and the right to self-determination, and no one should be allowed to harm it. So, it is necessary to work from within to cross over this phase. In my opinion, the domestic front will be cohesive.

[Zaydani] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, Shim'on Peres, whose statements you undoubtedly listen to, is very optimistic about the possibility of reaching an agreement with the Palestinians. Do you share this optimism?

['Ashrawi] In fact, I have said this in the past and I say it once more now: I see no reason for this optimism. The substantive issues, around which the deadlock or the crisis in the negotiations, revolve, are still the basis issues. These concern the territorial jurisdiction and Jerusalem. But, if there is any optimism as a result of ideas proposed for Gaza, Jerusalem, or other ideas, I can say that these ideas are still not final and they have not yet been presented in the form of a complete, specific project. We will see what will happen. But, I think the reasons for the crisis are still there, and the Palestinian side still adheres to these basic issues. These issues cannot be avoided or delayed, nor can they be cast aside in the negotiations.

[Zaydani] Will the Gaza-Jericho First and the early transfer of power plans be proposed in the next round?

['Ashrawi] The decision on these issues will be made in Tunis. There is a good possibility that the Gaza-Jericho First proposal will be discussed. As for the early transfer of power, we gave an official and written response at that time, and we closed discussion on this issue. It seems the U.S. and Israeli sides are both interested in raising this issue again. Our answer is clear. We are committed to a genuine transfer of power to an elected Palestinian authority as part of a political agreement. We are not interested in partitioning authority, the territory, or the interim phase.

[Zaydani] In a statement last night, Shim'on Peres, called for concentrating on the meeting points between Israel and the Palestinian and leaving the points of dispute until later.

['Ashrawi] Basically, the meeting points concern secondary and technical matters, and not substantive issues. Even if we find an agreement on 90 percent of the points, the remaining 10 percent—which are the basic issues—remain points of dispute, and these cannot be postponed, because, if we postpone discussion, these issues can destroy any agreement. It is necessary to tackle these issues and find a just solution to them before moving forward or talking about progress in secondary or technical matters.

[Zaydani] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, thank you very much.

['Ashrawi] You are welcome. [end recording]

Western Loans Sought

AU2608092593 Paris AFP in English 0914 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Rome, Aug 26 (AFP)—The Palestine Liberation Organisation is believed to have approached Italy and other Western governments for a loan to stave off bankruptcy, the newspaper LA REPUBBLICA reported on Thursday [25 August].

It said it understood the foreign ministry here turned down the request on the grounds that the PLO represented no real state and therefore a state loan could not be authorised.

An official at the PLO office in Rome, Nimr Hammad, told LA REPUBBLICA that bankruptcy for the organisation was a matter of three months away.

He and his nine colleagues here have not been paid since June and they owe two months rent on the flat where their office is situated, the newspaper said.

Sale of Amman Property Considered

JN2608083593 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Aug 93 pp 1, 24

[Report by Tawfiq 'Abid]

[Text] Amman—The PLO is considering a proposal to sell a plot of land it owns in Jabal al-Husayn, near the Palestine Liberation Army Hospital, to meet financial obligations.

AL-DUSTUR has learned that the land is more than two dunums [2,000 square meter] in area and is registered in the name of a Palestinian carrying a Moroccan passport. Investigations are under way to find out if the man is still alive and his whereabouts.

Regarding the reduction in the number of employees working in Palestinian embassies, and especially in Amman, to control expenditure, we were unable to reach Ambassador al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, who was busy with President Yasir 'Arafat during his current visit to Jordan.

The PLO has closed embassies in East European states to control expenditures.

Officials Prepare for Executive Committee Meeting

'Arafat Holds Strategy Meeting

JN2508194193 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 1900 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Palestine President Yasir 'Arafat met with prominent Palestinian figures in Amman today to map out strategy before a crucial meeting in Tunis of the PLO Executive Committee. Among those attending was Palestinian negotiator Sa'ib 'Urayqat, who arrived from the occupied West Bank for the meeting. A PLO official said the meeting focused on current crises within the PLO and ways to solve them.

Abu-Sharif Previews Session

NC2608080993 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0510 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Telephone interview with Bassam Abu-Sharif, PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser, in Tunis by Fawzi al-Jundi in Cairo; carried on the "Dialogue From Afar" program, date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Jundi] Welcome to the Voice of the Arabs.

[Abu-Sharif] Thank you.

[Al-Jundi] The PLO Executive Committee will naturally discuss numerous organizational issues as well as matters pertaining to the next round of negotiations. Could you tell us more about this?

[Abu-Sharif] The Executive Committee will hold an extraordinary and very important session this evening. Of course the issues on the agenda are important. The decisions made will have important repercussions at this critical, historic juncture of the Palestinian struggle. Despite the current campaigns against him, president Yasir 'Arafat, as is his wont, will adopt with his colleagues resolutions beneficial to the Palestinian people.

[Al-Jundi] Mr. Abu-Sharif, we have noticed a recent spate of resignations. Following the reports about the resignations of some members of the negotiating delegation, there have been reports about resignations among PLO members. How much attention will be devoted to the resignations and other organizational issues during the Executive Committee's discussions tonight?

[Abu-Sharif] Brother Fawzi, you know that Palestinian democracy sometimes exceeds that of the most famous democratic countries. Every Executive Committee member has the right to give his opinion on organizational and political matters. As you no doubt have noticed, public statements are occasionally made that might or might not agree with the PLO's general line. This is our democracy, however. We are happy and proud of it. Every Executive Committee member has the

right to resign for any reason. Brother Mahmud Darwish, for example, did not wish to remain an Executive Committee member. He wanted to devote himself to poetry. He has the right to resign in order to focus on his creative pursuits. Nevertheless, I wish to say that the so-called crisis within the Palestinian ranks is not limited to the resignations of Mahmud Darwish or Shafiq al-Hut. As you know, there is opposition to the PLO's policy. This opposition was expressed inside the Palestinian parliament—the Palestine National Council. A minority opposes the PLO's participation in the peace process and the negotiations with Israel. This minority expresses its views inside other bodies, such as the Executive Committee and the PLO Central Council. This is natural. For example, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine suspended its membership in the Executive Committee to protest the PLO's political line. We are not worried by this democracy. Nevertheless, some people try to misrepresent the PLO's position and president 'Arafat's status. President 'Arafat enjoys the confidence of the entire Palestinian people and the PLO, both the majority that supports the general policy line and the minority opposition.

[Al-Jundi] Mr. Abu-Sharif, let us discuss an important issue on which the PLO Executive Committee will focus this evening. It is connected with the proposal that the Palestinians will present during the 11th round of peace negotiations in late August. This pertains to a gradual implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 242 by an Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho as a prelude to implementing full Palestinian autonomy. Can we say that by making this proposal the Palestinians are throwing the ball into the Israeli court?

[Abu-Sharif] Representatives of all the Arab countries participating in the peace process will meet on 27 August to adopt unified decisions regarding the coming round of talks. As you know, we have agreed with our Arab brothers who are participating in the negotiations to coordinate our stands and to go to the talks with a united position. This is a basic stand to which we are always committed. On the other hand, the ball is still in the U.S. court and the Israeli Government's court. All the Arab parties, including the PLO, have presented stands designed to facilitate the peace process and implement UN resolutions, notably Resolutions 242, which calls for ending Israeli occupation of the Arab and Palestinian territories seized in 1967. We are waiting for the United States to act like a full partner in the talks, as it announced it would. We expect it to use a single, not double, standard when Rmplementing UN resolutions. As to the transitional period, the Israeli Government has so far failed to comply with Palestinian demands. It is still keeping some occupied areas, such as Jerusalem—which, enlarged, now represents a fifth of the West Bank's area—under so-called Israeli sovereignty. We will not accept this and will continue our struggle. We will remain committed to the peace process until UN resolutions are fully implemented.

[Al-Jundi] Mr. Abu-Sharif, the Voice of the Arabs thanks you and always welcomes you.

[Abu-Sharif] Thank you.

Further Resignations Expected

JN2608100693 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Aug 93 p 28

[Text] Amman—Informed Palestinian sources have stressed that the representatives from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] on the PLO Executive Committee, as well as 'Abdallah Hurani, an independent member, will suspend their memberships in the Executive Committee when the committee meets in Tunis this evening.

The Executive Committee meeting will also be attended by poet Mahmud Darwish, who has already submitted his resignation. His presence at the meeting indicates that he may have changed his mind about resigning.

Dissolution of Committee Urged

TA2508181393 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1630 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Dr. Riyad al-Maliki, an opponent of the peace process, said today that all PLO policies must be reassessed. Dr. al-Maliki called for dissolving the PLO Executive Committee and reorganizing it on the basis of the political forces in the Palestinian street.

'Ali Abu-Hilal, who is affiliated with Nayif Hawatimah's Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, said today that the PLO has failed in its current policy toward the peace process and that it is passing through a real crisis requiring a reappraisal of its current makeup.

Official Calls For Emergency PNC Session

JN2608112793 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 26 Aug 93 p 25

[By 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Text] Taysir Qubba'ah, deputy speaker of the Palestine National Council [PNC], considers the Gaza-Jericho First Plan and the deferring of the Jerusalem issue to the final stage a deviation from the six bases the PNC approved during its recent session held in Algiers in September 1991.

Qubba'ah said these resolutions [bases] are: A full Israeli withdrawal from the Arab and Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, considering Jerusalem an indivisible part of the occupied territories, stopping the establishment of settlements, the PLO's right to form its delegation, stressing the comprehensive solution, and rejecting unilateral solutions.

Qubba'ah called for an emergency PNC session. He warned that this is one of the most serious stages in the

history of the Palestinian people as a result of the attempts to liquidate the Palestine question, and the Palestinian leadership's acceptance of the U.S. and Egyptian pressures, and its readiness to make one concession after another.

The deputy PNC speaker expects the PLO Executive Committee to call for a PLO Central Council meeting during its meeting in Tunis today. However, he said that such a decision cannot resolve this difficult problem, which will only be resolved after a PNC emergency session.

He added: Let the PNC, which includes 480 members, convene soon to discuss the deteriorating situation of the Palestine question, and to stress the need to adhere to the PNC resolutions and to prevent anyone from violating them.

The deputy PNC speaker also expects a number of PLO Executive Committee members to submit their resignations within the next few days. He said that the resignations of Mahmud Darwish and Shafiq al-Hut have reached the PNC chairmanship. He said that these resignations are in effect but added that a final decision on them will be made at the next PNC session.

Concluding his statements to AL-RA'Y, Qubba'ah expressed the hope that this deterioration in the PLO, the Palestinian people's moral homeland, will stop. He said that this can only be achieved by rejecting the Palestinian leadership's unilateral decisionmaking whether on the political, financial, administrative, or organizational levels.

Delegates View Crisis, Effect on Peace Negotiations

Leaders Meet in Jerusalem

TA2508113293 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Report by Moti Amit]

[Text] The heads of the Palestinian peace delegation today held consultations and made last-minute preparations prior to their departure for Tunis tomorrow. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, who left for Amman this morning, will discuss the Washington talks with 'Arafat, after which he will travel to Beirut to attend the Arab foreign ministers conference convening tomorrow to decide on the Arab delegations' participation in the Washington talks. East Jerusalem sources have said that Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat has been the territories Palestinians' foreign minister for several months now, representing them at similar conferences.

Sources close to the delegation noted this morning that all the reports about a new rift between the PLO and representatives of the territories are nothing but a tempest in a teacup, because it is natural for the Palestinians to voice their disagreement on the issues of power, authority, and various key appointments as an agreement with Israel draws closer. The sources stressed their belief that a breakthrough will be achieved and an agreement signed during the upcoming round of talks, because the financial aid promised by Arab countries and the United States depends on that.

Asked whether the Palestinian delegates will prefer to focus in the coming talks on the Gaza-Jericho arrangement or the transfer of the Civil Administration's powers, one of the delegation's advisers said that if the Israeli delegates' actions suit the recent declarations of Prime Minister Rabin and Foreign Minister Peres, an accord combining a partial territorial settlement in Gaza and Jericho with a settlement of the issue of the Civil Administration's powers will be achievable.

'Urayqat on Talks, Economic 'Blockade'

NC2508112593 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0510 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Telephone interview with Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, deputy head of the delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks, in Jerusalem by Fawzi al-Jundi in Cairo, on the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Jundi] Let us start the dialogue directly.

['Urayqat] The issue has nothing to do with the number of rounds in the peace talks. The success or failure of the next round depends to a great extent on Israel's willingness to adhere to the basis for the peace process, which is the principle of exchanging land for peace.

So far, the main problem is that Israel is trying to split this equation by speaking about peace—what it is and what is its nature—without paying attention to the principle of returning the land. If there is an Israeli desire to accept both parts of the basis of the peace process, I believe that it will be possible to accomplish the task. However, if the current Israeli Government continues to procrastinate and restrict itself to playing with semantics, I believe that the fate of the next round will be similar to that of the previous ones.

[Al-Jundi] What do you say about two statements issued by the Palestinian and Israeli sides: the first by PLO Executive Committee Member Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh that he expects a breakthrough during the next round of negotiations and the second by Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres that the next round will accomplish what many people do not expect?

['Urayqat] Regarding the next round, there is a Palestinian view that what is called the Madrid equation has exhausted itself and that there is a pressing need to present new ideas. As President Yasir 'Arafat said a few days ago, the Palestinian delegation intends to propose new ideas concerning a merger between the transitional and final stages on the basis of a gradual (?implementation) of Resolution 242 beginning with Gaza and Jericho. This is regarded as a shift in position and a new idea, but this will greatly depend on the responsiveness of Israel and the United States.

[Al-Jundi] Can we say that there is a Palestinian proposal to be presented on a withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho as a first step?

['Urayqat] As I mentioned, there are ideas and the Palestinian leadership will have to choose one of the options. A meeting will be held in Tunis in the coming hours or days to endorse final plans and give instructions to the delegation to the next round. One of the ideas now proposed to the leadership is a phased [Israeli] withdrawal and merging of the transitional and final stages on the basis of implementing Resolution 242, which is the Gaza and Jericho option. So far we do not know what Israel's reaction is; this is regarding 'Abd-Rabbuh's statements. As for Peres' statement, I believe it is an unjustified optimism, especially since the Israeli Government has shown no hint or made an actual decision to accept the full reference of the peace process or make the required changes on the ground, particularly in the areas of settlement, human rights, closure of the occupied territories, and other issues that are obstacles to peace.

[Al-Jundi] Don't you believe that the recent Israeli move on the repatriation of a number of deportees on 8 September is a sign of good intentions, or is it a tactical maneuver by Rabin?

['Urayqat] These matters should not be gauged by good intentions. Israel deported 415 Palestinians, brushing aside international law and the Fourth Geneva Convention. When Israel decides to return them, why should we call this a good intention? Israel made mistakes and is rectifying them. It is the deportees' right to return.

What is required is an Israeli decision acknowledging the principle of land for peace and that the aim of the peace process is to end occupation on all fronts. So far, we have not heard any official Israeli commitment on these main issues, not at the negotiating table or away from it.

[Al-Jundi] Do you believe that recent reports about differences in views between the Palestinian delegation and the PLO leadership in Tunis and rumors of some differences within the PLO will affect the task of the Palestinian delegation at the next round of negotiations?

['Urayqat] I would like to assert that there are no differences whatsoever between the Palestinian delegation and its leadership in the PLO. The Palestinian delegation is made up of individuals entrusted with a mission by their leadership just like any other delegation.

The problems now facing the PLO and the Palestinian people lie in the economic blockade imposed on the Palestinian people both inside and outside the occupied territories. Our institutions in the occupied territories, universities, hospitals, social security agencies, and others are liable to collapse because we are subjected to a siege. I call on the Palestinian people anywhere at this crucial phase to rally around the PLO under the leadership of Yasir 'Arafat because it is the PLO that decides whether the Palestinian people represent a community, minority, or a nation with legitimate national rights. Therefore, I do not know the reason for reports about such differences. There are no differences. Regarding the domestic problems we are facing, they are problems caused by the economic blockade imposed on the Palestinian people.

[Al-Jundi] Do you means problems inside the occupied land?

['Urayqat] The problems we face deal with the siege imposed on us and on our institutions and people. There is a financial difficulty that actually subjects our institutions to collapse. These are the problems that face us and they should not be interpreted as disagreements between the PLO and any other party. The people here are rallying around the PLO under the leadership of brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat]. We should distinguish the problems imposed on us that are caused by the economic blockade, which is political blackmail and is designed to force us into making political concessions, which has not happened.

[Al-Jundi] The United States repeatedly announces that it will adhere to the role of full partner and impartial mediator in the peace talks and that this announcement must be translated into action at the negotiating table. As Palestinians, what do you expect from the United States during the next round?

['Urayqat] I agree that the statement that the United States is a full partner should be translated into action at the negotiating table. But, regrettably, despite U.S. announcements since 1967 that east Jerusalem is part of the occupied territories because settlement is illegitimate and an obstacle to peace, and as the aim of the talks is to end occupation—a stand declared by former president Bush's administration—we have not seen the U.S. stands at the negotiating table. The United States so far has not played the role of full partner, arbiter, or mediator. The U.S. Administration, as a sponsor of the conference, should promptly reiterate its announced stands on the principle of exchanging land for peace and not split this equation. The failure of the United States to intervene regarding the basis of the peace process, particularly Resolution 242, means that the peace process will encounter real hazards.

Al-Husayni Denies Remarks

TA2508131593 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 25 Aug 93 p 1

[Excerpt] Jerusalem—A statement issued by Faysal al-Husayni's office in Jerusalem yesterday says that the head of the Palestinian negotiating team to the peace process "did not propose the establishment of a national salvation government." The statement explained that al-Husayni "only called for convening a national conference on social and economic problems to explore ways of aiding Palestinian institutions in the occupied territories." [passage omitted]

Al-Husayni Not To Attend Talks

TA2508184193 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Excerpt] The Palestinian delegation to the peace talks scheduled to resume in Washington next week will consist of only seven members. This is due to the PLO's financial difficulties. Our Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari says that Faysal al-Husayni will not travel to Washington. Our correspondent Amir Hay reports:

Palestinians are now saying that a man seeking the assistance of relatives must be desperate. They are referring to the fact that 'Arafat is using the East Jerusalem office of his mother-in-law, Raymonda Tawil. The office, which is one of the main PLO organs in the territories, today published a survey indicating Palestinian support for 'Arafat along with a condemnation of the resignations of PLO Executive Council members.

The East Jerusalem press office says that the poll, which is based on interviews with 50 prominent residents of the territories, is a true reflection of general Palestinian public opinion.

As expected, the survey's findings are unequivocal: Those resigning are evading responsibility, and 'Arafat was and remains the Palestinian people's life buoy, in the respondents words. On the surface, the survey seems unreliable. [passage omitted]

'Ashrawi Predicts No Progress in Talks

TA2608073993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Excerpts] The Palestinian delegation is departing today for consultations in Tunis in advance of its arrival in Washington early next week, all this against the background of the political and financial crisis in the PLO. Due to the PLO's financial difficulties the delegation was cut by half. Faysal al-Husayni will apparently not participate in the talks. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports:

[Begin Amir recording] [passage omitted] Referring to the chances of the negotiations in the upcoming round of talks, Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi expressed surprise about the optimism evinced by the representatives of the Israeli Government, emphasizing that she is not optimistic and that in her opinion no breakthrough will be made in the next round of talks.

Sources in East Jerusalem clarified that the gap between what the Palestinians demand in implementing Gaza-Jericho First and what Israel is really offering is too wide. They claim that the idea of Gaza-Jericho First will be accepted only when Israel presents a detailed timetable for a withdrawal from the rest of the territories.

Referring to the issue of early empowerment, the sources assess that progress will be made on this issue, but no agreement will be signed. In other words, both the delegation members and their political advisers in East Jerusalem do not believe that the next round of talks will generate any progress unless Israel evinces more flexibility which will convince the Palestinian street to accept such an agreement. [end recording]

Peres, 'Abd-Rabbuh Optimism Questioned

TA2508144893 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 25 Aug 93 p 2

[By Samir 'Izzat Ghayth]

[Text] Jerusalem—Dr. Mamduh al-'Akir, member of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, commented on Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres' remarks in the Danish capital yesterday on a possible agreement expected to be signed by the Palestinians and Israelis.

Al-'Akir said: I do not know where Peres' optimism stems from. Undoubtedly, more surprising is the optimism of brother Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, head of the PLO Information Department, who apparently is not aware of the gap separating the Palestinian position from the Israeli-U.S. position, which makes the possibility of reaching any imminent agreement something requiring a miracle.

Sources: Conflicts Exaggerated

TA2508125593 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 25 Aug 93 p A2

[Report by Yosi Torpstein]

[Text] Sources in the Palestinian delegation believe that reports on the crisis within the PLO leadership were exaggerated, just as were the reports on political differences of opinion within the mainstream PLO-Tunis and PLO-territories. They noted that most of the delegation members and most of the leadership in Tunis support the political line adopted in the draft declaration of principles submitted to the United States.

According to the sources, the difference in approaches reflected in the Palestinian document submitted to the Americans is insignificant. They denied that there are differences of opinion between the delegation and the PLO leadership on East Jerusalem and the option of Gaza and Jericho First.

At the same time, the sources assessed that the PLO's financial crisis is extremely severe. In their opinion this crisis caused the shockwave in the PLO's leadership, as expressed in the resignation of Executive Committee members, "who are trying to evade the responsibility of difficult decisions." According to these delegation members, the present shock wave will be dwarfed by what is expected to take place when the time comes for the decisive decisions in anticipation of an agreement with Israel, in which the Palestinians will apparently have to make several concessions in order to obtain reciprocal Israeli concessions.

These delegation members, who were optimistic about the chances of the negotiations with Israel, said that the

idea of Gaza-Jericho First will serve as a leading idea in the upcoming negotiations and could result in a breakthrough. The discussion of this proposal, however, is linked to and conditional upon a comprehensive framework agreement which would deal with the status of the rest of the territories, including East Jerusalem. They said that such a framework agreement could take the form of a joint Israeli-Palestinian declaration of principles. According to their assessment it will be possible to overcome the gap between the Palestinian and Israeli concepts in this issue.

A minority of the Palestinian delegation opposes the Gaza-Jericho First proposal, claiming it is unwise from the tactical point of view. They maintain that its implementation would extricate Israel from its difficulties in the Gaza Strip without any guarantees that at the end of the process Israel would agree to withdraw from the rest of the territories according to the Palestinians' demand. Both the opponents and supporters of the plan, however, noted that the issue has not been studied in depth so far.

In recent meetings held between various political elements in the territories—mostly those affiliated with the PLO—in the framework of what is known as "the national dialogue," it has been suggested that a "national salvation committee" be established in the territories which would serve as a source of authority for the Palestinian population. The "salvation committee" would concentrate on solving social and institutional problems and on democratization in the territories. This idea was also expressed in the PLO Executive Committee's recent decision to establish "bodies of national authority in all parts of the territories."

Senior members of the Palestinian delegation also defined the meetings as an attempt to "open the gates to a democratic dialogue between the opposition and the delegation." According to these sources, over the next few months—or by the end of the year—profound changes in the political situation in the territories can take place as a result of a possible agreement with Israel. They added that everything must be done to prepare for such a possibility so that the Palestinians will not be dragged by the opponents of the peace process into an internal power struggle.

The Palestinian delegation members are presently holding sessions in which they are consolidating working papers toward their departure later this week for consultations in Tunis, in anticipation of the 11th round of peace talks next Tuesday [31 August].

Talks Opponents, Supporters on Crisis

JN2508184493 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1430 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Report by Sa'id Mu'addh carried within "With the Events" feature—passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] While Yasir 'Arafat is preparing to confront the unprecedented political crisis in the PLO during the upcoming PLO Executive Committee meeting, scheduled to be held in Tunis later this week, PLO opponents and supporters in the West Bank and Gaza are raising their voices against what is taking place within the PLO.

Opinions about the current crisis vary. Those opposing the peace process call for a reconsideration of the PLO's overall policy and a reorganization of the PLO Executive Committee and the Palestinian institutions. Dr. Riyad al-Maliki, who opposes the peace process, says:

"What is required now is a comprehensive and responsible assessment. This in turn requires the resignations of the PLO Executive Committee members and the formation of an interim collective national leadership to deal with this situation and overcome the crisis as soon as possible with the least possible losses. Then this interim comprehensive, collective, and national leadership will call a Palestine National Council session on new democratic bases rather than the current ones, in order to introduce comprehensive democratic reforms into the PLO's bodies and institutions, to secure a real representation within these institution, and to reach the right and suitable decision on the Palestine question."

Those supporting the PLO and the peace process call for unified efforts rather than avoiding responsibility. They call for facing reality and for unifying ranks in the face of the difficult circumstances and the serious phase the PLO and the Palestine question are facing. Member of the Palestinian negotiating side, Dr. Marwan al-'Akr, says:

"I believe that the PLO, as well as the Palestine question, are facing critical days. We are definitely at a crossroads. This requires a careful and profound discussion of matters, as well as the highest degree of determination to face up to our historic responsibility, in order to make national decisions, which are in harmony with our national rights and interests. This, in turn, requires an expanded and profound dialogue among all parties out of their sense of responsibility, as I have said."

'Ali Abu-Hilal, an opponent of the peace process, calls for reorganizing the PLO leadership and reconsidering its current policy. He says:

"Yes, it is clear that the crisis in the PLO's institutions is acute, which has been expressed in the recent resignations by PLO Executive Committee members. Other resignations by PLO Executive Committee members may take place. I believe that the crisis expresses the nature of the leadership holding sway over the PLO, which talks about democracy and at the same time exercises an antidemocratic policy daily."

Bethlehem mayor and member of the Palestinian side, Ilyas Frayj, calls for facing up to the responsibility, for cooperation, and for rallying around the Palestinian leadership to overcome the current crisis. He says:

"What is required is cooperation, understanding, and solving all matters through a frank and constructive discussions taking into account the higher Palestinian interests. We have to stop displaying our differences in the media while we are approaching the 11th round of negotiations. I hope all of them will withdraw their resignations and stop threatening to resign. We have to cooperate to find an honorable and satisfactory solution based on international legitimacy. The continued resignations and threats of resignation will have a counterproductive effect on the negotiations, the PLO, and the future of the Palestinian people."

PFLP, DFLP Criticize 'Arafat, Gaza-Jericho Option

TA2508135493 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 25 Aug 93 p 1

[Text] Tunis, Ramallah, QUDS PRESS—In a joint statement issued in Tunis yesterday, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] criticized what they described as the PLO's agreement to implement the Gaza-Jericho First option, and expressed their opposition to this.

The statement said: These positions deal another grave blow to the Palestinian cause and open the way wide for the evolution of the political settlement process, as this process totally responds to the U.S.-Israeli perception contained in the joint declaration of principles between the Palestinian and Israeli delegations submitted by the U.S. State Department.

The statement criticized what it called " 'Arafat's disregard of legitimate Palestinian institutions, his monopoly on making crucial decisions, and his hegemony over the management of the negotiations separate from Palestinian national forces."

Reports on Factions' Assets Denied

JN2608110193 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 26 Aug 93 p 17

[Text] PLO Executive Committee Member 'Abd-Rahim Malluh has denied reports that George Habash's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] has some $400 to $500 million in assets. He said the Palestinian national forces are now coming under attack.

Malluh, who is also a PFLP Central Committee member, told SAWT AL-SHA'B that the Palestinian factions are also facing a suffocating financial crisis resulting from pressures exerted against them.

He added: The attack at this time accuses the Palestinian factions of turning their back on the Palestinian people and taking care of their own interests only.

Malluh stressed that the PLO is now coming under attack because it represents the Palestinian people's political and national being. He explained that the PLO's constituent factions are also coming attack.

The day before yesterday, press reports said the Palestinian factions are quite rich; the PFLP has some $400 to $500 million, while the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] has some $100 million in assets. The quota the DFLP received from the Palestine National Fund was halted some 20 months ago, while the PFLP's quota was reduced.

Withdrawal From Talks Urged

JN2608064493 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 25 Aug 93

[Text] In a statement to the press, the 10 Palestinian factions [opposing the Arab-Israeli peace talks] have urged our Palestinian people's masses inside [the occupied territories] and the diaspora to consider 31 August 1993 a day of comprehensive national strikes to emphasize their rejection of the Madrid-Washington course and the American paper.

They also urged the negotiating team to withdraw from the bilateral and multilateral talks on the eve of the 11th round of talks, scheduled to be held in Washington on 31 August 1993.

Editorials Examine Origins of Current Crisis in PLO

Financial, Political Blockades Seen

PM2508103893 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 24 Aug 93 p 11

[Editorial: "PLO Crisis"]

[Text] The current crisis facing the PLO is the result of two blockades: financial and political. These two blockades have succeeded in sparking some internal contradictions in the PLO represented in the resignations announced over the past five days.

Since the second Gulf war the PLO has been subjected to continued pressures from the U.S. camp, which thought it had triumphed over Iraq and the other Arab states which opposed the use of Western military force to destroy an Arab country. These pressures have assumed several forms, some political, designed to try to split the PLO and strike at its internal national unity, and others financial, aimed at drying up its resources and undermining its national institutions. These two blockades coincide with Israeli-U.S. pressures seeking to compel the Palestinians to accept a settlement that falls far short of their aspirations to an independent state and the right to self-determination on their national territory.

Israel realizes that the continuation of Arab financial aid to the PLO would put the PLO in a strong position from which it could disrupt the proposed solutions and reject what it deems unsuitable from them. This is why Israel suggested that the United States use its influence to persuade the Arab states granting this aid to suspend it—which is what happened.

If some Arab states have reservations about the PLO's policy and its position on the second Gulf war, why have these states stopped supporting Palestinian institutions inside the occupied territories? What fault have the families of the martyrs, wounded, and detainees held in the occupation jails committed for them to be denied food, when it was they who fought and were martyred and in some cases detained before the Gulf war and before the Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait?

The regrettable thing is that present pressures on the PLO and the disagreements resulting from them can never help the Palestinian negotiator in the 11th round of negotiations, which is the most important and serious round in the history of the peace process launched at the Madrid conference.

How can this negotiator struggle with his Israeli counterpart at the negotiating table and try to get concessions from him, when he sees Arab and non-Arab daggers stabbing him?

Any political settlement is the result of current Arab conditions. When Arab solidarity was at its peak and the military option was on the cards, the Arabs rejected direct negotiations with Israel and insisted on a UN-sponsored international conference formula based on the resolutions of international legitimacy. But now—after the Gulf war's results, the destruction of Iraq, the nonexistence of the military option, and the collapse of the Soviet Union—Arab solidarity no longer exists and the Arab states are now competing to negotiate with Israel in the bilaterals and multilaterals. And some of them are volunteering to end the boycott weapon and begin normalization secretly and openly.

These political conditions can only produce a weak and imposed settlement coupled with threats of further starvation for the Palestinians and deportations of some of them from the Arab states, exactly as happened during the Kuwait invasion crisis and after the return of the al-Sabah family's government to power.

It is a bad time by all standards. Now Arabs and Israelis conspire side by side to liquidate the first central Arab issue in broad daylight.

Rebuilding of PLO Foundations Urged

TA2508181193 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 25 Aug 93 pp 1, 7

[Editorial: "Our People: Facing a Difficult Test]

[Excerpts] The call to set up a national salvation government with the aim of halting the collapse of Palestinian institutions is proof of the escalation of a crisis from which the Palestinian people and their leadership are suffering. The depth of this crisis has been manifested in the shameful financial situation that has led to the closure of institutions and offices inside and outside, and induced many officials to level harsh criticism on the PLO and accuse it of mismanagement and financial corruption.

Our people in the occupied territories are very apprehensive not because they have lost their vision and perception nor because they are unaware of the collapse of Palestinian institutions, but because they realize that it is essential to preserve and protect the PLO. Regardless of the criticism and the distribution of responsibility for what has happened, it is necessary to maintain the PLO's structure and existence. This Palestinian house must not be demolished directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally. Although the occasion does not permit one to remain silent about what is happening, we must not be rash in our criticism and should prevent adversaries from exploiting our weak points. The PLO's collapse will have grave consequences for the Palestinian cause. Only the PLO has the legitimacy to make crucial decisions in the negotiations and the peace process and prevent the Palestinian people's fragmentation, as was the case before the PLO's establishment.

Regardless of how painful the situation is, our people should not keep faulting themselves. The PLO's crisis began with the Gulf crisis, which eliminated the hopes for Arab unity, solidarity, and power. The PLO derives its power from the Arab nation. Every crisis that afflicts the Arab nation has an adverse effect on the PLO and the Palestinian people. Today, the Arab world is fragmented because of a pan-Arab retreat and the victory of regionalism and regional division. With the fall of the bulwark of pan-Arab security, the protection enjoyed by the PLO collapsed. The circumstances through which our Arab nation is passing today is the best proof of the PLO's link with its nation. Talk about the independence of Palestinian decisionmaking and rejection of the hegemony of any Arab party over this decisionmaking have no relation whatsoever with reality. We are an integral part of the Arab nation. Pragmatism dictates that we admit that our existence is physically linked to the destiny of this nation. [passage omitted]

If a comprehensive national dialogue has become an urgent necessity, the Palestinian leadership is dutybound to call for this dialogue in order to formulate new concepts and shift from a negative to a positive reality. There is no longer room for procrastination. We have to rebuild those PLO foundations that have decayed with a new formula and a realistic view compatible with the reality of the Palestinian cause and people.

Deportees Spokesman al-Rantisi on Repatriation

TA2508184893 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1630 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Telephone interview "this evening" with Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rantisi, spokesman for the Palestinian deportees, in Marj al-Zuhur by Shlomo Ganor in Jerusalem—recorded]

[Text] [Ganor] Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz, good evening.

[Al-Rantisi] Good evening.

[Ganor] Shlomo Ganor from Israeli Television in Jerusalem is speaking.

[Al-Rantisi] Greetings.

[Ganor] Dr. al-Rantisi, what is your comment on the Israeli decision to advance the repatriation date of the first batch of deportees to next month?

[Al-Rantisi] The fact is that we are endeavoring for the repatriation of all of us to our homes. Hastening the return is a source of pleasure to us.

[Ganor] You know that the repatriation will be in stages.

[Al-Rantisi] I know that the repatriation will be in two stages. In the past we rejected that when rejection was necessary and when we held all the cards aiding our rejection. Now we have accepted when acceptance has become necessary. All the cards that aid our rejection are gone from our hands. Consequently, rejection now constitutes a danger to our repatriation's future.

[Ganor] Does this mean that the decision to return was adopted unanimously in the camp, or was there any wavering?

[Al-Rantisi] The fact is that the decision to return was adopted after a study over three consecutive days. The study was conducted carefully and the decision was adopted unanimously.

[Ganor] Were there any votes against the decision to return?

[Al-Rantisi] The fact is that there were no votes against the decision, but during the discussion everyone voiced his opinion and ultimately we emerged with one view.

[Ganor] That is repatriation in stages.

[Al-Rantisi] That is repatriation on the basis of the recent Israeli proposal.

[Ganor] Dr. al-Rantisi, are the returnees aware of the possibility that each one of them will return to the judicial status that prevailed on the eve of his deportation?

[Al-Rantisi] Yes, they are aware of this, but prison is preferable to remaining outside the homeland.

Egypt

Groups Threaten U.S. Interests If Shaykh Tried

NC2608122693 Paris AFP in English 1157 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Excerpt] Asyut, Egypt, Aug 26 (AFP)—Egypt's main Muslim militant groups on Thursday [26 August] threatened to attack American interests if the United States puts Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman on trial.

A spokesman representing the three groups told AFP "We threaten to take revenge against American interests in Egypt or abroad if the U.S. Administration goes ahead with proceedings against our spiritual leader."

'Abd-al-Rahman was indicted Wednesday in the bombing of the World Trade Center that killed six people and injured more than 1,000 and plots to blow up other New York City landmarks. He was also accused of conspiring to kill President Husni Mubarak during a planned trip to the United States.

The spokesman said he represented al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah [Islamic Group], Jihad and Vanguard of the Conquest groups which are waging a violent campaign against Mubarak's secular government.

He said the groups would "take a joint stand against the American regime and Arab leaders who collaborate with it" in a fight against Muslim fundamentalism.

"We won't give in to provocative actions taken against Shaykh 'Umar and the Islamic movement," the spokesman said. [passage omitted]

Muslim Brotherhood: Charges 'Illogical'

NC2608085693 Paris AFP in English 0800 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Cairo, Aug 26 (AFP)—Egypt's fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood on Thursday [26 August] dismissed as illogical charges that Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman was involved in the World Trade Center bombing and other terrorist plots.

Spokesman Ma'mun al-Hudaybi said that it was "inconceivable that an elderly man like Shaykh 'Umar could issue a fatwa (religious edict) authorising the destruction of a building in the United States."

The influential Muslim Brothers are tolerated in Egypt as a cultural and religious association, but barred from acting as a political party.

Shaykh 'Abd-al-Rahman, 55, is the spiritual leader of the al- Jama'ah al-Islamiyah, a militant fundamentalist group waging a violent campaign against President Husni Mubarak's secular government.

Al-Hudaybi said the shaykh, who is wanted in Egypt, "is not a young hothead but an old man who justifiably sought refuge in the United States" and it was against his interests to become mixed up in any plots.

The charges have "no logical basis" he said, adding that even if the World Trade Center had been destroyed "it would not have changed American policy."

The blind shaykh was indicted Wednesday in the Trade Center blast that killed six people and injured more than 1,000.

He allegedly led a terrorist cell that carried out the bombing and plotted to blow up other New York City landmarks.

The indictment also charges 'Abd-al-Rahman and three fellow defendants of conspiring to kill Mubarak during a planned trip to the United States.

'Abd-al-Rahman has been acquitted three times by Egyptian courts, including on charges stemming from the 1981 assassination of Egyptian president Anwar al-Sadat by Muslim fundamentalists.

He is wanted in Egypt to face charges of participating in an anti-government riot in 1989.

A legal adviser to the Egyptian Government said it would maintain an extradition request for the shaykh "whatever the accusations made against him and their affects on his stay in the United States."

The adviser, who requested anonymity, said the extradition request, issued on July 4, was made on a solid legal basis.

Vanguards of Conquest Claim Suicide Attack on Minister

NC2508183793 Paris AFP in English 1749 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Cairo, Aug 25 (AFP)—A Muslim militant claimed during a court appearance here Wednesday [25 August] that two members of his organisation carried out a suicide bombing that wounded the Egyptian interior minister last week.

During a military court appearance by 47 Islamic militants accused of forming a revolutionary organisation, one of the accused shouted out that the organisation, Tala'i' al-Fath (the Vanguard of the Conquest), carried out the attack last Wednesday in which five people were killed.

While his co-accused shielded him to protect his identity, the man said that Nazih Nushi Rashid and Diya'-al-Din Hafiz, named last week by the police as the attackers, had embarked on a suicide attack to try to kill the minister.

The accused also claimed that Rashid, himself sought by the police to stand trial with the others, was the head of Tala'i' al-Fath's military wing.

Seventeen people were injured in the attack, which took place in downtown Cairo, including the interior minister, Hasan al-Alfi, who was wounded in the arms and is currently receiving treatment in Switzerland.

The militants on trial since August 15, together with another 7 who are on the run, are all accused of illegal possession of firearms and explosives and being involved in forming Tala'i' al- Fath, said by authorities here to be the brainchild of the man behind the 1981 assassination of President Anwar al-Sadat, Ayman al- Zawahiri.

Two new names of accused were presented to the court Wednesday.

In addition, six of the 54 are accused of killing two people in Cairo in 1990 to steal their truck, and of trying to kill three policemen the same year in order to steal their weapons.

Egyptian authorities are seeking the extradition of al-Zawahiri, who is currently living in Peshawar, Pakistan, together with a number of Egyptian militants who fought in the Islamic mujahidin in Afghanistan during the war against Soviet occupation in the 1980s.

A western news agency last week received a statement from the Jihad claiming responsibility for the bombing.

One of the accused Wednesday presented a document to the presiding judge accusing the security forces of torturing a number of his co-accused after the attack on the interior minister.

President Husni Mubarak transferred the trials of all Islamic militants to military tribunals last year, and 25 death sentences have been passed by the tribunals since then, with 15 Islamic militants hanged since June.

Lawyers Contest Confessions

NC2508173993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1521 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Cairo, 25 Aug (MENA)—The Higher Military Court this morning held a hearing of the Vanguards of Conquest case, involving 55 defendants, seven of whom are still at large.

At the outset of the hearing, the president of the court said that the Military Prosecution has pressed charges against two additional men: Ayman 'Abd-al-Halim, the 54th defendant, and Mahmud 'Abd-al-Sami' Ahmad Shahin, the 55th defendants. They stand accused of membership in an illegal organization and participation in terrorist operations. The president of the court asked the two defendants for their plea. They entered a plea of not guilty.

The military prosecutor said that medical examination of the second, sixth, and 52d defendants failed to find any sign of injury in any of them. The prosecutor said that examination of the two guns belonging to the 17th defendant showed them to be of local make and one of them in working condition.

The court asked the defense to prepare a list of the defense witnesses. The court allowed the relatives of the defendants to meet them during the recess. The court decided to open the sealed envelopes containing material evidence related to the case, including a number of military uniforms, books urging terrorist acts against the regime, and books showing methods of manufacturing bombs and ammunition.

The court listened to a forensic report stating that the rounds of ammunition found with the defendants were in working order.

The defense lawyers moved that the confessions of the defendants be annulled because they were obtained under duress [tahta al-daght].

Al-Alfi Discharged From Hospital

NC2608063793 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0335 GMT 26 Aug 93

[From the press review]

[Text] The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH reports that Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has been discharged from the Swiss hospital where he has been receiving medical treatment. The paper says that the arm injury he sustained during the unsuccessful attempt on his life on 18 August is now completely cured. The minister will spend a brief period of recuperation abroad before he returns to Cairo to assume his duties at the Interior Ministry.

Mubarak Addresses University Staff, Students

NC2508170793 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Excerpts] President Husni Mubarak today met with the presidents of Egyptian universities and outstanding students in the grand conferences hall of Alexandria University. During the meeting, Mubarak reviewed internal and external issues. [passage omitted]

Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif stated that Mubarak dealt with the importance and objectives of changes in the coming stage, which will have a clear effect on developing performance in Egyptian universities. He added that the president reviewed the comprehensive report prepared by research centers regarding the rate of unemployment in 14 governorates in Upper and Lower Egypt. The president also dealt with the issue of terrorism in the world, which, he said, must adopt a clear, definite, and coordinated stand on terrorism. The president noted that Islam is a religion of tolerance and good counseling and he emphasized the citizen's role in confronting terrorism and exposing terrorist elements in Egypt. He also noted that the entire people have become like one man in confronting terrorism, which constitutes a danger for us all.

The president said that his decision to shoulder the responsibility of another term in office stems from his sense of responsibility to stand with the people in the

same trench during the current critical stage. The president also dealt with the positions of friendly states that supported Egypt in its economic crisis and issues.

The information minister then spoke about the expanded meeting that was attended by the students, presidents, deans, and professors of Egyptian universities. He said that Mubarak expressed his pleasure at meeting with the youths of Egyptian universities. He explained the situation since he assumed office and the efforts that have been made to build the infrastructures for all production and service projects, and how we were able to overcome the economic crisis Egypt faced with firmness and strong will. The president lauded the efforts of all the governments that participated in achieving the policies of economic reform for which there was no alternative to rebuild the country. He said: We are moving toward achieving social balance.

Mubarak said: We have reached an unprecedented agreement with the IMF. It is the best economic program. We took into account the social dimension and gradual implementation. We will not sell the public sector, but will retain the big industrial enterprises while small enterprises will be offered for private investment. The president also noted that Egyptian workers will be safeguarded and that no worker will be harmed or displaced as a result of the economic reform policy.

Mubarak said: I am eager to establish good relations with all the Arab and world states and leaders. Regarding the Libyan-Western crisis, he said that Libya is a neighboring Arab state and we stand by it to find a suitable solution to the crisis. [In a similar report on Mubarak's remarks, Cairo MENA in Arabic at 1421 GMT on 25 August adds the following: "President Husni Mubarak affirmed that Egypt has never asked Libya to surrender the two suspects in the Lockerbie case. He said: We make proposals and offer solutions to Libya to enable it to find a suitable solution to this crisis. He said that the Libyan-Western problem on the Lockerbie issue featured prominently in the talks he held during the visit he made to the Libyan Jamahiriyah last week. He also discussed several issues pertaining to cooperation between the two countries."]

The president then referred to the issue of terrorism and how it started with those who returned from Afghanistan after receiving training there. He described them as far from religion and stressed that we will confront them by the law and the Constitution. His excellency said: I am sad that there are Egyptians who commit such crimes. He said that there are some who defame Egypt in certain opposition papers. He said we are seriously considering stiffening the penalties against any paper that defames a citizen without any proof, in line with what is applicable in democratic states to protect the citizen and society.

Mubarak said: We are the least corrupt state in the world. We do not conceal corruption, even if it is committed in the closest circles. The courts will be the judge in these matters.

Mubarak said that some changes are expected in the future. Change should be purposeful and objective and take justice and the public interest into consideration.

Regarding reports about the direct election of the president, Mubarak explained the presidential election systems in democratic states, noting the existence of cases in which outside forces exert pressure to buy the presidential post. The president then has to pay the bill at the expense of his dignity or by forfeiting national independence and will in favor of these forces. I will not accept this in Egypt, he said. Mubarak said: My program is known and I have announced it on more than one occasion. It emphasizes democracy, freedom of opinion, respect for justice, confronting terrorism, and achieving a balance between wages and prices.

Russia's Yeltsin Sends Mubarak Message on Ties

NC2508164993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1506 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Cairo, 25 Aug (MENA)—Russian President Boris Yeltsin has affirmed the importance of President Husni Mubarak's role in developing and promoting the relations between Egypt and Russia.

This came in a message President Mubarak received from President Yeltsin on the occasion marking the 50th anniversary on the establishment of diplomatic relations between Egypt and the former Soviet Union. The message was received by Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, from Russian ambassador to Egypt Vladimir Polyakov.

The ambassador said after the meeting that Yeltsin also stressed that there are vast prospects to strengthen the relations between Egypt and Russia. The ambassador added that his talks with Dr. al-Baz dealt with developments in the Middle East region and the peace process.

In his statement, the Russian ambassador voiced his country's readiness, in its capacity as a cosponsor of the peace negotiations, to play a role in advancing the peace process and eliminating the obstacles facing the negotiations. He said that Russia is in constant contact with all participants in the peace process in a bid to help all sides find the necessary solutions as soon as possible and establish a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East region.

Polyakov noted that Russia supports solving the Bosnian problem through peaceful means rather than force. He expressed hope that the current negotiations in Geneva will be successful.

Mubarak, Shaykh Zayid Conclude Series of Talks

Mubarak Praises Shaykh's Support

NC2508144493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1148 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Excerpts] President Husni Mubarak and Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab

Emirates [UAE], held a session of talks this afternoon as part of the series of meetings they are holding in Alexandria during the current visit of Shaykh Zayid.

President Mubarak told journalists: I cannot praise His Highness Shaykh Zayid enough, as you know his position very well. He is a man of great and firm stands in support of Egypt and its people, stands that will be counted in his favor and will be recorded by history. Mubarak added: His Highness Shaykh Zayid stated with courage when relations were broken between Egypt and the Arab states that they had made a mistake in deciding to break off relations.

Mubarak referred to His Highness Shaykh Zayid's support for land reclamation and agricultural projects and his support and financing of four major projects in Egypt. [passage omitted]

Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif described the talks between the two leaders as extremely positive and showed complete identity of views on all the issues. He said that the two leaders affirmed during their frequent meetings the common historic positions of the two countries.

UAE President, Delegation Depart

NC2608120893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1020 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Alexandria, 26 Aug (MENA)—United Arab Emirates [UAE] President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan and his delegation left Burj al-'Arab Air Base for his country today following a five-day visit to Alexandria.

President Husni Mubarak led a high-level delegation to see him off, including Prime Minister 'Atif Sidqi, several ministers, Alexandria's governor, the commanders of the Armed Forces' main branches, the commander of the Northern Military District, the commander of Burj al-'Arab Air Base, and the staff of the UAE's Cairo Embassy.

Tourism Minister Begins Visit to Tabah, Israel

NC2608100793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0928 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Cairo, 26 Aug (MENA)—Tourism and Civil Aviation Minister Fu'ad Sultan left Cairo with a delegation today on a visit to Tabah, from where he will go to Israel on a one-day visit. Before leaving Cairo, Sultan said that the visit, at the invitation of Israeli Tourism Minister 'Uzi Bar'am, will be devoted to a discussion of Egyptian-Israeli tourist developments and future ventures in light of the possible success of the current peace negotiations.

Singapore Information Minister Arrives on Visit

NC2508121993 Cairo MENA in English 0745 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Excerpt] Cairo, 25 Aug (MENA)—The Minister of Information, Culture, and Arts of Singapore George Yeo arrived here early this morning on a three-day visit to Egypt. [passage omitted]

AL-AHRAM Denounces Israeli 'Threats' Against Syria

NC2608072293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0615 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Cairo, 26 Aug (MENA)—AL-AHRAM has denounced the Israeli threats against Syria that have intensified this week, calling these threats meaningless.

In its editorial today, the paper says that these threats come only a few days before the scheduled opening of the 11th round of bilateral talks in Washington on Tuesday [31 August].

AL-AHRAM adds: There is no basis for Israel's belief that the Syrian forces deployed in Lebanon are capable of controlling Hizballah's fighters in Lebanon. If the reports about progress in the peace talks on all tracks are true, then has the problem become solely focused on the Lebanese track? Is the Hizballah militia the only one impeding the peace process? The paper goes on to say: It has been said in the past that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] was impeding the Palestinian-Israeli talks but then it emerged that the Hamas members are only a minority amid the Palestinian majority that wants the negotiations to continue. Hizballah's members are also a very small minority.

Concluding its editorial, AL-AHRAM says that Israel should not make Hizballah an excuse for making military threats because such threats must be dropped if the Israelis have sincere intentions.

Editorial Criticizes U.S. Policy on Bosnia

NC2508121193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0610 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Cairo, 25 Aug (MENA)—AL-AHRAM says that the U.S. stands on the Bosnia tragedy confirm that President Clinton's administration has not been able to find a way to deal with the new world crises and that it cannot define its position.

In its editorial today, Wednesday, the paper adds that the Bosnian tragedy has turned into a serious test for the handling of the U.S. foreign policy under the new democrats' administration. The paper points out that U.S. positions and statements made by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher are characterized by reluctance and confusion.

The paper notes confusion in the recent U.S. stand. First, the U.S. Administration announced a plan to launch air strikes on Bosnian Serbs and lift the arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims and a few days later it retracted the plan and turned its focus on the importance of unifying U.S. and European policies on the issue.

Kuwait

First Visit to Algeria Since Gulf War Planned

LD2508115893 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1026 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 25 Aug (KUNA)— At the beginning of next month, Jasim al-'Awn, the minister of social affairs and labor, accompanied by a high-ranking delegation, will start a tour of a number of Arab countries. The tour will last 12 days and include Algeria, Lebanon, and Morocco.

Al-'Awn's visit to Algeria is the first working visit by a Kuwaiti official of this level since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. [passage omitted]

Asked whether this visit is being seen as a step toward the normalization of relations between the two country, he merely said: "These are political matters which concern the Ministry of Foreign Affairs." [passage omitted]

Oman

Sultan, Jordan's Husayn Discuss Regional Issues

Cooperation, Peace Talks Viewed

JN2508121593 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn and his brother His Majesty Sultan Qabus bin-Sa'id of Oman held a round of talks at al-Hisn palace, in Salalah, today. The talks between the two leaders dealt with avenues of bilateral cooperation in a manner that serves the interests of the two countries and two fraternal peoples and the interests of the peoples of the region. The talks also dealt with Arab and international developments, and efforts under way to unify Arab ranks, in addition to the peace process in the region.

Talks Continue in Salalah

JN2508165793 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn and His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id of Oman resumed their talks at the al-Hisn Palace in Salalah today. The talks dealt with ways of promoting brotherly bilateral cooperation, the latest Arab and international developments, and the efforts being exerted to close Arab ranks. The talks also dealt with the Middle East peace talks, in light of the efforts reach a comprehensive, durable, and just peace that achieves security and stability for the peoples of the region.

King Departs After 3-Day Visit

JN2608140893 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Excerpts] His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan departed the country at noon today following a private three-day visit to the Sultanate. During the visit, he held talks with his brother His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id. His majesty the sultan led those who bade the Jordanian monarch farewell at Salalah civilian airport. [passage omitted]

Earlier today, His Majesty Sultan Qabus met with his brother His Majesty King Husayn at the al-Hisn Palace in Salalah. The two countries' delegations attended the meeting. The two leaders discussed the distinguished bilateral relations and ways of promoting them in the interest of the two fraternal peoples. The two leaders also discussed matters of joint interest.

Sultan Qabus Receives Message From President Clinton

JN2608141593 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] His Majesty Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id received a written message from His Excellency U.S. President Bill Clinton on the ongoing contacts and consultations between the Sultanate and the United States on bilateral relations and topical issues.

The message was delivered by his excellency the U.S. ambassador to the Sultanate when his majesty the sultan received him in his office at the al-Hisn Palace in Salalah today.

The meeting was attended by His Excellency Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs.

Saudi Arabia

Afghanistan's Hekmatyar Addresses Correspondents

LD2408204393 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Aug 93

[Report on address by Afghanistan Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar to domestic correspondents in Jeddah on 23 August]

[Excerpts] Jeddah, Aug 23, SPA—[Passage omitted] Hekmatyar stated: "We are confident that our brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia view problems in Afghanistan as their problem and the issue of Afghanistan as their issue, and that they are concerned with this issue and the problems occurring there just as they are concerned with their own issues and problems."

The Afghan prime minister expressed his hope that the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would have a pioneering and distinctive role at this stage as it had during the Jihad stage.

Hekmatyar confirmed that the Afghan Mojahedin were committed to the Mecca Agreement which both the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan signed. He

expressed his hope that this agreement would be implemented and that elections in Afghanistan would take place to introduce a constitution for the country.

Hekmatyar pointed out that his country had entered a new phase of reconstruction and healing in order to establish an Islamic state in Afghanistan. He said: "We have terminated a regime in Afghanistan and a phase in which we had fought to eradicate that regime. We are now preparing ourselves to enter a new phase in which we want to establish an Islamic state."

Hekmatyar then said: "We consider this phase to be more important than that of jihad against the forces of Russian occupation. We are positive that the Afghan people, which overcame the previous phase, will also overcome the present one, with God's grace, and will set up an Islamic regime in Afghanistan. [passage omitted]

Hekmatyar assured the Islamic nation that conciliation and peace will return to Afghanistan and that war will be over forever.

He explained that what was happening in Afghanistan was the same as what was happening on the Islamic scene, in Bosnia-Hercegovina, Somalia, Tajikistan, Burma, Kashmir, Palestine, and Azerbaijan. He pointed out that the problems in Afghanistan were caused by the factors as those in the aforementioned Islamic countries.

[Passage omitted] Following his comments, Hekmatyar answered some questions from the press. Replying to question on the outcome of his meeting with the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-Al-'Aziz, Hekmatyar replied: "The meeting with the custodian of the Two Holy Places was cordial. In an atmosphere of love and brotherhood, we examined in detail the latest events in Afghanistan, issues of the region and what action to take in Afghanistan to reconstruct it."

Hekmatyar added: "The custodian of the two holy mosques was responsive, and we hope that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will have a big role in the reconstruction of Afghanistan." Hekmatyar then said: "We also examined with the ministers topics relating to projects expected to be built in Afghanistan such as communications, roads, electricity, and fuel, as Afghanistan is extremely in short of those, in addition to the repatriation of refugees."

In reply to a question on the return of Afghan refugees to their country, Hekmatyar explained that agreements in that respect had been signed with Pakistan and Iran in which we stressed, in coordination with the UN, that the return to Afghanistan would be at will, free of any coercion. [passage omitted]

Responding to a question on the internal crisis in Tajikistan, Hekmatyar said that Afghanistan had received a great number of refugees. He said: We are calling for a prompt and peaceful solution to the Tajik crisis and we are ready to cooperate in settling it. Hekmatyar added that we believe that if negotiations were held between Dushanbe and the Tajik resistance, they would result in a provisional transitional government, elections would be held and, we believe, that would contribute to a solution to the Tajik question.

He indicated that neighboring countries should play the role of fixers and not send in troops, as Russia had done, to attack villages and rural areas, which in his opinion led to an escalation in the situation. Hekmatyar warned against a repeat of Moscow's Afghanistan experience in Tajikistan.

In reply to a question on elections in Afghanistan, Hekmatyar said that we want elections to be held according to the Mecca Agreement. He said that we believe that the best way to settle the Afghan problems is to hold those elections. He noted that we have managed to set up an elected shura [consultative] council to supervise and control all actions in the country.

King Fahd asked Hekmatyar about the date of the elections and was told that they would be held in two months' time. Hekmatyar added: "We asked the custodian of the two holy mosques to send a delegation to Afghanistan to invite all parties to abide by the Mecca Agreement and to implement it. He promised us that a delegation would be sent to carry out the request."

Hekmatyar said: "We welcome all the wise decisions by the custodian of the two holy mosques and consider them a good step forward, God willing."

[passage omitted]

Defense Minister Said To Escape Assassination Attempt

JN2508164593 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1545 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Tehran, 25 Aug (SANA)—An Iraqi opposition source in Ahvaz in southern Iran has said that 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, defense minister of the Iraqi regime, was the target of an assassination attempt near a paper factory in al-Basrah during a recent visit. The source added that the Iraqi minister, who is known for his severe brutality, escaped the assassination attempt.

Blast Destroys Saddam Statue; 4 Die in al-Thawrah

NC2508174593 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1700 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] According to a reliable source, an explosive device went off underneath a statue of Iraqi regime President Saddam Husayn in Baghdad on 7 August. The statue was destroyed in the explosion. The source said that the regime removed the destroyed statue on the same day.

Reports indicate that another explosion occurred in the al-Thawrah quarter in Baghdad on 24 August. The blast left four people dead. The identity of the victims and the perpetrators is not yet known.

Attempt To Air Live Relay of Incident Termed 'Undisciplined'

JN2508162493 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 10 Aug 93 p 8

[Article by Interior Minister Watban Ibrahim al-Hasan: "To the Management of the Television of Youth from Dar-al-Salam: Democracy is a Double-Edged Weapon," published in the "Beyond the Red Line" column]

[Text] On Wednesday evening, 4 August 1993, the Television of Youth from Dar-al-Salam aired interviews with a number of Interior Ministry officials on the criminal explosion that took place on the same day near the Ibn-al-Bitar Hospital in al-Salihiyah [in Baghdad].

We are astonished by the childish, irresponsible behavior on the part of the television team that taped the incident. It ignored all security restraints applied to cases concerning the security of the state and the society. The team tried to relay a direct picture of an incident that just took place, not taking into consideration that national security first and foremost requires abidance by security restraints and measures. No democratic or undemocratic nation deals with security issues this way.

The aforementioned television station pretended to be after the truth and attempted to cover its reports with a democratic guise. However, it has forgotten that democracy is a two-edged sword. When it is exercised in a disciplined manner, in accordance with the interests of the people of the homeland, democracy becomes a national, constructive tool. However, when it is exercised in an arbitrary, moody, and undisciplined manner, it turns into a destructive tool and weapon in the hands of our enemies.

The television team that attempted to belittle the efficiency of our ministry's officials through this unattractive show should have reaffirmed its eagerness about democracy, if it is really aware of the principles of democracy. It should have waited for the outcome of the proper investigations to obtain sound and accurate information instead of hastily airing that offending tape. It has forgotten that we are still in a state of confrontation against our enemies and that the Mother of Battles is still continuing.

Does it serve any national interest to report hasty statements about a criminal act that has just taken place, before a proper investigation is carried out to determine the party responsible for the incident and its political motives?

Does it serve any national interest to interview an official who declined to make a statement for security reasons, which may be linked to the supreme national interest? Does that reflect democracy, good manners, and responsibility?

The television team did not give any party a chance to investigate the incident and determine its circumstances. This is despite an official announcement indicating that the Iranian regime was behind the cowardly action. It should have taken into consideration that such a statement is issued by a central agency, rather than a ministry under secretary, a police director, or any other quarter. Such political matters are outside our jurisdiction. We are responsible for maintaining security and order, not for political statements. Whoever tries, through his childish, irresponsible, undisciplined, and uninformed behavior, to turn democracy into a tool for belittling the efficiency of honest people is a weapon in the hands of our enemies.

As the leader has said, Iraq is "the homeland of everyone, and it is the responsibility of everyone to maintain its security and sovereignty." Among the most important requirements for maintaining our national security is to meet the restraints observed in dealing with security issues.

Finally, the mass media's wise and mature dealing with vital national issues is the best way to serve great Iraq. As for undisciplined and childish practices, they gravely harm our national march.

[Signed] Interior Minister Watban Ibrahim al-Hasan, 7 August 1993

Dhi Qar Tribes' Agricultural Role Lauded

JN2508121093 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1030 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi, Revolution Command Council member and prime minister, has

conveyed leader President Saddam Husayn's greetings to tribal chieftains, dignitaries, and sons of al-Islah Subdistrict in Dhi Qar Governorate. He also conveyed to them his excellency's pride in their honorable national stands.

Speaking at a meeting with them today, the prime minister said the march of the 17-30 July revolution, led resourcefully by the symbol of Iraq, leader President Saddam Husayn, shall remain invulnerable to the enemies, who will not be able to undermine its great achievements, no matter how far they go in their evil.

Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi stressed the important role played by the tribes of Iraq at this stage, in their contribution to the reconstruction process and in expanding the cultivation of strategic crops by making use of all cultivable land. This will enhance the country's agricultural drive and help it achieve self-sufficiency and thwart the conspiracy of the unjust embargo, he said.

UK Commentaries Cited on Defection of Ambassadors

JN2508211493 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] In a commentary published today on the defection of former Iraqi ambassadors Hamid al-Juburi and Hisham al-Shawi to Britain, the British newspaper THE INDEPENDENT says: The two ambassadors seem to have thought that the situation is currently in favor of the opposition. That is why they decided not to return to Baghdad, and instead joined the opposition. But, it seems that their judgment was erroneous, particularly since they have not visited Iraq for a long time. They have learned of Iraqi developments only through reports coming from inside Iraq. [as heard] Besides, their defection will not undermine the status of the Iraqi leadership, especially since they have been posted abroad for many long years.

The paper adds: It is true that the economic sanctions have hurt the Iraqi economy. However, the West, in particular, is being blamed for this.

The paper wonders why the two ambassadors chose to defect at this point in time, posing the following question: Where were the two ambassadors throughout the last period? They were supporters of President Saddam Husayn, who, all of a sudden, in their opinion, turned into the leader of a terrorist regime that is working against the people. This took place only when their work abroad was terminated.

The newspaper THE GUARDIAN describes the news conference held by the two defecting ambassadors as merely an attempt by the so-called opposition to make a public display of its existence. It indicates that their move has failed to influence the standing of the Iraqi leadership in any way, particularly since President Saddam Husayn has managed to rebuild and reconstruct the damage caused by the war so quickly and effectively. Moreover, the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq, the paper notes, have actually worked in favor of President Saddam Husayn, whose popularity has been boosted.

THE GUARDIAN adds: The so-called opposition is found outside Iraq, or in Iraqi Kurdistan, and nowhere else. As for the domestic situation in Iraq, it is completely different. Consequently, the defection of two ambassadors who spent a long time abroad will not affect the domestic situation in Iraq.

The paper says the Iraqi domestic front is strong, and that the forces surrounding the Iraqi president have maintained their allegiance to him.

Further Reportage on Defectors

WA2608124493

For London PRESS ASSOCIATION reportage on the defection of Iraqi Ambassadors Hamid al-Juburi and Hisham al-Shawi, including a report on the news conference held in London on 24 August, please see the Britain section of the 25 August West Europe DAILY REPORT, pages 12 and 13.

Saddam's Secret Sources of Finance Examined

PM2508095893 London THE DAILY TELEGRAPH in English 25 Aug 93 p 15

[Paul Vallely report: "How He Is Getting His Cash"]

[Text] Western intelligence services will have many questions to ask the two senior Iraqi diplomats who announced their defection in London yesterday. Among the first will be what they know of Saddam Husayn's ruses to buy state-of-the-art military technology abroad in contravention of United Nations sanctions. There have been successful subterfuges. Iraq has managed, according to a US Congressional report, to rebuilt 80 per cent of its pre-war military capability.

How has Saddam been able to finance all this? There are restrictions on is sale of oil. There are sanctions designed to starve him of spare parts and construction materials. Some $4 billion of Iraqi assets are frozen in overseas banks. He is deprived of the expertise of foreign advisers who staffed his military and civilian industries.

The key to Saddam's remarkable tenacity does not lie in Iraq. It is to be found in Geneva where the dictator's half-brother, Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti, is the regime's permanent representative to the UN mission. That is his official title. In reality, for four years he has been Saddam's secret financier.

Barzan was earlier this year appointed his brother's chief foreign policy adviser but he has continued to shuttle between Baghdad and Geneva where he masterminds a complex web of undercover companies estimated to control some $20 billion in hidden investments. Kroll Associates, a firm of financial investigators hired by the Kuwaiti government to track down Saddam's money, estimates that Western governments have been able to

block around $5 billion. But Kroll, which is known in the world of finance as the CIA of Wall Street, estimates that less than 20 per cent of Saddam's investments will ever be identified.

The agency's head, Jules Kroll, reckons that Iraqi investors have purchased nearly $1 billion in shares in public companies in the West on Saddam's behalf. Kroll believes that the Iraqi leader has for the past 10 years been siphoning off around 5 per cent of his country's $200 billion oil sales since 1981. He also claims to have evidence that Saddam has skimmed off an average of 2.5 per cent on many contracts with Japanese companies. At the centre of all this is Barzan with his easy access to the closed world of Swiss banking.

"Barzan controls various company accounts through middlemen and lawyers," according to Ahmad Shalabi, a former banker who is now president of the executive council of London-based opposition, the Iraqi National Congress. "The system operates like the Mafia. Money is held by individuals. No legal documentation exists to trace it to anyone beyond them. But in fact they are placemen. Until the war the regime has tried to husband Barzan's funds. But over the past two and a half years they have had to spend about $3 billion."

Kroll, with its staff of former senior officers from US and British intelligence, are not the only investigators engaged in chasing Saddam's secret funds. The US Treasury Department and the Inland Revenue also have teams on the same trail, as do the CIA and MI6 and a number of other agencies. Much of the cash, they suspect, is held in the names of private individuals. "There are a number of Iraqis who have enormous personal assets and no reason for having them," said one British investigator. "We suspect that these are fronts for the money controlled by Barzan al-Tikriti. If you ask these individuals they will insist it is their own money. But no one believes them."

Such suspicions were confirmed when Nasir Madhur, who was Barzan's personal translator, defected earlier this year. "Barzan does operate through placemen who act as fronts and agents," Nasir said. "Their job now is to manage Barzan's money in the form of investments and trading companies."

But most of the funds are invested through dummy companies. "One of the things that shows up is how well Saddam has compartmentalised his finances," said one US financial detective. He cites as an example the Montana Corporation, a Panama-based holding company which Kroll found held 8.4 per cent of the shares in the giant French media empire, Hachette. The shares were worth $64 million. Montana's directors all turned out to be resident in Baghdad. They began buying shares, with a 1 per cent acquisition, in 1981. There was no reason why Hachette should ever know that Saddam was in any way involved.

There are added difficulties. Many shares in European companies are held in bearer form, so ownership rests with whoever physically holds the share certificates. And some governments have been less rigorous with Saddam than others. "The French are playing a big role in all this," said another US investigator who uncovered a group in one French bank conspiring to cover up Iraqi holdings.

Barzan's role is not restricted to managing the secret funds. He is also the key sanctions breaker. "He controls many multinational companies—Iranian, Lebanese and French," said another British expert. "Barzan can buy anything—weapons, machine parts, chemicals. He exports and imports, through Turkey, Jordan and Yemen. Amman has become the commercial centre of Iraq but the finances spin out of Geneva."

There are signals now that the regime is getting tight for cash. "A lot of the commercial deals which are being allowed within sanctions are being paid for with gold and with promises of discounts on future delivery of oil," a US financial insider said. For months now Iraq has been selling gold to Jordanian banks. "But without Barzan al-Tikriti it would all have happened a lot sooner."

Foreign Ministry Says Envoy in Tehran Attacked

JN2608102793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0950 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Aug (INA)—The Iraqi Foreign Ministry has expressed its astonishment at the attack on the third secretary at Iraq's Embassy in Tehran last Friday [20 August].

The Foreign Ministry described the attack on 'Abd-al-Karim 'Isa Ibrahim by the Iranian security forces as a flagrant violation of the principles of diplomatic immunity. The ministry said that the Iranian Government has neglected its duty to protect foreign diplomats accredited to it.

A Foreign Ministry source told INA that the ministry is following developments in this issue with extreme concern. The source said this is an unjustified attack and conflicts with the simplest diplomatic rules.

INA has learned that Iranian security personnel attacked 'Abd-al-Karim 'Isa Ibrahim, third secretary at the Iraqi Embassy in Tehran on Friday, 20 August, with clubs and iron tools. He sustained serious head injuries and severe bruises on various areas of his body and was was hospitalized as a result.

Ships Stranded Since Iran-Iraq War Depart al-Ma'qil Port

JN2408151393 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1355 GMT 24 Aug 93

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Aug (INA)—Foreign ships have departed al-Ma'qil Port in al-Basrah Governorate after having been stranded at the port since the beginning of the Iranian aggression against Iraq in 1980. A source at the Ministry of Transport and Communications noted

today that the departure of the cargo ships was a response by the owners to a call made by the competent Iraqi authorities, after the navigation capability of the Shatt al-'Arab was restored. The depth line in Shatt al-'Arab is 12 meters during the ebb tide.

The Iraqi source added that, between 5 July and 17 August, the following ships left al-Ma'qil Port: Arti, Horizon, Silvkrin, Eva, Falatini, Mana, Low Balty, and Salil Philip [all names of ships as received].

The source noted that Iraqi authorities called on the owners of 54 cargo ships in June to check with the Iraqi Ports Authority and the State Enterprise for Maritime Transportation in order to have their ships towed within two months. The source added that the time limit has been extended for another two months.

Kuwaiti Aid to Kurds Termed 'Serious Threat'

JN2508190793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1837 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Baghdad, 25 Aug (INA)—Commenting on a report carried by AFP to the effect that the rulers imposed on Kuwait have decided to dispatch what they called urgent aid, at a cost of $3 million, to agent groups in the northern part of the homeland via Turkey, a responsible source has stated the following to INA: Iraq views this move by the treasonous and subservient regime imposed on Kuwait as a serious threat jeopardizing its security and sovereignty. Iraq reserves the right to reply to such hostile move in defense of its security and sovereignty at the appropriate time and in the appropriate way.

Vice President Receives Libyan Brotherhood Official

JN2508113393 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1030 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Taha Muhyi-al-Din Ma'ruf, Revolution Command Council member and vice president, has received Dr. al-Sadiq Sa'id 'Imran, secretary of the Libyan Arab Brotherhood Office in Baghdad, on the occasion of the assumption of his new post.

During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations and ways of enhancing them in the interest of the two fraternal peoples.

OPEC Chief Criticized for Call Not To Lift Oil Ban

JN2608065893 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 2 Aug 93 p 1

[Editorial: "Middleman's Slip of Tongue"]

[Text] In impertinent remarks symptomatic of a brassy and gross way of thinking, OPEC's Secretary General Subroto said recently he hoped the United Nations will not lift the ban on Iraqi oil exports any time soon in order to avert a glut of the crude on the world market.

Universally notorious for the conspiratorial intentions he has harbored toward OPEC and its members since he became a black market merchant and a star of dubious deals, Subroto's slip of the tongue betrays the avarice of his masters who stand to gain from Iraq's absence from the international oil market, and who have grown used to reaping ill-gotten revenues.

Instead of denying Iraq's rights and seeking to prolong its absence from the oil market, the OPEC secretary general should have taken the trouble to look for the real causes of the collapse of oil prices and keep a tab on certain well-known member states, who have been overproducing beyond their officially allocated quotas.

Subroto knows only too well that he is lending a hand to the conspiracy against a country that was subjected to a criminal, unwarranted aggression as punishment for its effort to bring stability to the oil markets in the interest of developing and poor nations.

Let Subroto—the loyal servant of international oil cartels and the middleman prostrating himself before the oil shaykhs whose bellies are bloated with ill-gotten money—know that Iraq will pursue its rights, and, against his will and that of his masters, it will return to the market with renewed vigor. Iraq will thwart their plots, and the day will come when those who had sought to injure Iraq will find that remorse will do them no good.

Airspace 'Violations' Protested to Arab League

JN2608103993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0750 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Cairo, 26 Aug (INA)—Iraq has informed the Arab League of the Saudi and Kuwaiti rulers' continued provision of facilities to U.S., British, and French aircraft that violate Iraq's airspace. Iraq said that this poses a serious threat to Iraq's security and sovereignty.

In a letter he sent to Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid yesterday, Iraq's permanent Arab League representative said that these aircraft violated Iraq's airspace on 21 and 22 August and carried out 126 hostile air sorties after taking off from their bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

The Iraqi representative enclosed with this letter a list explaining these violations, and requested that it be distributed to Arab League member states to acquaint them with these regrettable facts.

Secret Agreement To Upgrade Level of Talks Reported

TA2608104793 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 26 Aug 93 pp 1, 8

[Report by Pe'erli Shahar]

[Excerpt] A surprising development is taking shape prior to the next round of peace talks, which are scheduled to open in Washington at the end of this month. 'AL HAMISHMAR has learned that the leaders of the countries participating in the negotiations have agreed in secret contacts to upgrade the level of the talks. The contacts are being conducted in total secrecy at the very highest echelons. It should be noted that Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has recently said on numerous occasions that he is not opposed to upgrading the talks to the ministerial level.

It should also be noted that in this case, the only problem that would have to be resolved in this regard is the issue of the representation of the Palestinian delegation. Senior sources asserted that in any case, the Palestinian representative would be appointed from among the members of the delegation. [passage omitted]

Peres: Accord With Palestinians 'Attainable'

TA2508194693 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by political correspondent Gadi Sukenik in Peres' office "this evening" —recorded]

[Text] [Sukenik] Mr. Peres, did you meet a senior PLO figure in Stockholm about a week ago?

[Peres] No, I met Swedes in Stockholm.

[Sukenik] Are there any grounds to the feeling that meetings or contacts took place there with PLO men?

[Peres] I see no need to go into detail about who, how, and when I met. I do not think that is the issue at the moment. One report was published, and I simply said that it was not true. I am not prepared to go into a series of unnecessary denials.

We know first-hand what the Palestinians think, and they have many thoughts, not just one. We must negotiate with the Palestinians as they are, and I devote all my stamina and ability to the way progress must be made rather than the channels through which action must be taken.

[Sukenik] How imminent is a first agreement with the Palestinians? You have voiced great optimism about it, while they have been slightly less optimistic.

[Peres] The entire purpose of the negotiations is to postpone the disagreements to a later date, and to assemble the agreements. It seems to me that three issues can be attained in the upcoming round of talks: 1) A declaration of principles devoid of controversial issues; 2) To enable the Palestinians to implement a self-government, at least in part of the territories, meaning mainly in the Gaza Strip; and 3) To make this Palestinian experiment financially, and not just politically, successful. After all, if it proves a success only from the political point of view it will fail from the economic point of view.

It is no secret that the Palestinians are going through very serious financial and economic troubles. In my opinion, the crisis afflicting them at present is more of a financial than a political nature. We want them to run their affairs in an orderly, stately, and successful manner as good neighbors of ours.

[Sukenik] According to the information in your possession, is there a chance of such an agreement being attained with us on the three issues you mentioned in the upcoming round of talks next week?

[Peres] I want to be very cautious when it comes to setting deadlines. I do not want to talk about next week or two weeks from now. I believe we are definitely near an agreement, that one is definitely possible and attainable.

[Sukenik] When you say mainly Gaza, does that mean Gaza and perhaps also Jericho?

[Peres] Perhaps, under certain circumstances.

[Sukenik] You conferred with the prime minister this morning, I believe you had a tete-a-tete meeting. Does he agree to the question of Gaza-Jericho First?

[Peres] First of all, I am not running a parallel government to that of the prime minister. I am a member in the government headed by Yitzhaq Rabin. We act in harmony.

[Sukenik] Could 'Arafat's shaky status impair the agreement you envision?

[Peres] As far as I am concerned, that is a theoretical question. We must negotiate with the other side as it is. It is not our job to analyze whether it is weak or strong, but to ascertain that it exists. And, in my opinion, it does.

Rubinstein, Beilin on Coordination Talks

TA2608114093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] This morning a coordination session was held between the multilateral and bilateral peace committees in the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports:

[Begin recording] [Raz] It looks as though it is necessary to coordinate among all elements striving to advance the peace process. This peace is made up of many clauses and fine print. This was the intention of today's coordination meeting. The bilateral committee was headed by

Elyaqim Rubinstein, and the coordinator of the multilaterals is Deputy Foreign Minister Dr. Yosi Beilin:

[Beilin] There is the issue of water, which is extremely problematic, and it is important to coordinate between the multilateral and bilateral tracks. There are also the issues of refugees, family reunification—including various figures and criteria relating to this issue. We cannot speak in different languages in the multilateral and bilateral tracks. The same holds true for the economic issue. Is it desirable, for example, to unite the region's electricity grids? Should we examine the issue of digging the Seas Canal Project? What is the preferable option?

[Raz] If so much coordination work is necessary, then maybe the format of the talks should be changed by canceling one of the tracks. Elyaqim Rubinstein believes this is uncalled for:

[Rubinstein] The present format concentrates more intensively on the bilateral track. This reflects the need to deal with the main issue, reaching arrangements in the bilateral sphere. The multilateral format is somewhat less pressing. It is more calm because it provides a long-term vision. At the same time, however, this track also touches on issues revolving around the bilateral track, such as projects which can have a multilateral character [as heard].

[Raz] Today's meeting dealt with the coordination mechanism, which will deal with five issues: water, refugees, economic issues, environment, and arms control. These issues relate both to the bilateral and multilateral tracks. It was decided that these coordination meetings will be held occasionally after the completion of the 11th round of talks in Washington, and after the fourth round of multilateral talks slated for October. Earlier on our newsreel Deputy Minister Beilin voiced optimism on the talks.

[Earlier on the same reel, Deputy Minister Beilin, in a recorded interview following the coordination meeting, tells political correspondent Shlomo Raz: "Between the 10th and 11th round of talks there were several significant developments, such as Operation Accountability, and Christopher and Ross' shuttles. There is a time factor here, as well as an increase of Muslim extremism. There is also a crisis in the Palestinian delegation. In my opinion all these things create a new situation which is considerably different from the situation during the 10th round of talks. In my opinion this facilitates the chances for a breakthrough in the 11th round, both on the Israeli-Syrian and the Israeli-Palestinian tracks."]

Elyaqim Rubinstein is more cautious than some of his colleagues in Israel and has fewer expectations regarding the next round of talks in Washington.

[Earlier on the same reel, Deputy Minister Beilin, in a recorded interview following the coordination meeting, tells political correspondent Shlomo Raz: "Between the 10th and 11th round of talks there were several significant developments, such as Operation Accountability, and Christopher and Ross' shuttles. There is a time factor here, as well as an increase of Muslim extremism. There is also a crisis in the Palestinian delegation. In my opinion all these things create a new situation which is considerably different from the situation during the 10th round of talks. In my opinion this facilitates the chances for a breakthrough in the 11th round, both on the Israeli-Syrian and the Israeli-Palestinian tracks."]

[Rubinstein] Look, our attitude is to say that a very serious effort is being made in relation to the declaration of principles. There are some bones of contention regarding various issues, as expressed in the sides reactions to the U.S. document. We have seen in the press how the Palestinians reacted to this document. There are bones of contention with which we have dealt extensively, such as the parameters of the interim arrangements, the Palestinians' demand for a comprehensive territorial jurisdiction, including the issue of Jerusalem. We in turn offered proposals regarding functional jurisdiction with considerable territorial aspects, albeit not total jurisdiction which would determine the permanent status, rather a jurisdiction which will ensure our security and the interests of the Israelis living in the territories and which will not preclude options for the permanent arrangement. All these issues are on the table. It will be possible to make progress if our partners to the negotiations adopt a realistic approach. There are also other proposals for the negotiations, such as early empowerment. This issue has not been exhausted and we are convinced it is applicable. Other proposals are also possible.

[Raz] What is the central issue, will emphasis be made on a joint document of principles?

[Rubinstein] This is one of the issues. Emphasis will also be put on early empowerment. If the other side has other proposals we will hear them. However, at this point these are the main issues.

[Raz] Did you raise the issue of Gaza-Jericho First?

[Rubinstein] It has often been said that any agreements-in-principle will be implemented in Gaza first. Beyond this we have to hear what the other side is offering. I do not think that at this point I can add anything. [end recording]

Political Circles Optimistic on Upcoming Talks

TA2608051393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Report by political correspondent Shlomo Raz]

[Text] Many contacts, especially behind the scenes, are being conducted in anticipation of the resumption of the peace talks. As a result, it is assessed by political circles in Israel and the United States that the next round of talks will result in a joint document of principles with the Palestinians, which includes several elements. The most interesting of these relates to the scope of autonomy, or

what is known as its territorial jurisdiction. Israel, contrary to the past, might agree to discuss this issue, on condition that Jerusalem and the settlements remain outside the discussions. If the Palestinians agree now to deal with the issue of early empowerment—including the areas of health, tourism, employment, and education—it is possible that there will be a discussion on the scope of autonomy.

The idea of Gaza-Jericho First is also on the agenda. Sources in Israel clarify, however, that this idea does not call for the establishment of a sovereign Palestinian entity in that area—contrary to the assessment of the Palestinians and the PLO, according to whom Gaza and Jericho will be sovereign enclaves.

The extensive contacts in anticipation of the talks are also dealing with what is called an economic package deal for the territories. It is no secret that the PLO's financial situation is extremely bad. The deal calls for European, American, and Japanese investment, as well as for an Israeli effort in this area. The concept behind this effort was expressed by Shim'on Peres, who said that without economic existence the political agreement would be meaningless.

Finally, today the bilateral and multilateral committees will meet in the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem to coordinate their positions.

Editorial: Time Right for Political Deal With PLO

TA2508160193 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 25 Aug 93 p 2

[Editorial: "Time for a Deal"]

[Text] Only on the face of it is the crisis currently afflicting the PLO of an economic nature. As a matter of fact, it is an identity crisis of a movement ceasing to operate as a terror organization and becoming a broad and multiparty political front.

A terror organization does not talk about budgets or discuss taxes. A terror organization settles disagreements by eliminating those dissenting from popular positions. A terror organization does not discuss painful problems publicly—most definitely not on the enemy's media, as the PLO has done on Israeli television—but eliminates any ideological differences in blood-dripping dungeons.

That was also the case with the PLO until not too long ago. Now, as a result of a series of developments, some of which stemming from the Rabin government's policies, the PLO looks like a suitable partner to political negotiations. Its talk and actions are guided by politics, vociferous and contentious at times, but mainly more democratic.

That is why it does not matter so much if the PLO in Tunis is more extreme than the PLO in the territories (as Israeli experts believed until only three weeks ago) or vice versa (as it transpires today). The fine line runs elsewhere. It distinguishes between Palestinians who realize full well that in the absence of true democracy in their national movement they will accomplish nothing and will continue to disintegrate, and Palestinians who insist on sticking to the old model of a centralized, clandestine, and Bolshevist organization led by one man, 'Arafat.

Hence, it would be a mistake to see the current crisis in the PLO as giving Israel cause to worry. "A weak 'Arafat," those same experts tell us today, "will have to prove that he is tough and the process might get stuck."

On the contrary, the more 'Arafat's one-man rule weakens and the PLO becomes more democratic and pluralistic, the more open it will be to political negotiations and to compromises. International political history shows that only democratic governments know how to and are willing to compromise when necessary. After all, they have no reason to fear the people who elected them, as tyrants the like of al-Asad must.

This is the right time to start wrapping up a political deal with the PLO. Rabin and Peres as well as al-Husayni and 'Ashrawi understand that, and so do most Israelis and Palestinians. It simply hangs in the hot and humid air of the Middle East.

The PLO has come a long way, and so have we.

Rabin's Office: New Golan Site Not Settlement

TA2508170693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Our correspondent in the north has learned from circles at the Prime Minister's Office that the office does not view the new Golan site as a settlement. An appeal sent by the Golan leaders to the Prime Minister's Office contended that the site would be populated by a group of people, and that it would be decided in talks with the authorities to which settlement the site is to be annexed. It was stressed that no illegal step had taken place, and that this was not a new settlement. This is the reaction received from the Prime Minister's Office.

Peres: Site May Be Dismantled

TA2608105593 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1000 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has leveled pointed criticism at the inauguration of the Dor Golan site [yishuv] on the Golan Heights yesterday. Speaking with our correspondent Qobi Mandel, he said it was possible the site would be dismantled.

[Begin recording] [Peres] To the best of my knowledge, this site was put up without a government license. It is inconceivable that in a democratic country, such a respectable body should take the law in its own hands or

decide the country's map. The government will definitely deal with this correctly and in adherence to the law.

[Mandel] Do you mean that we can expect the government to order the site dismantled?

[Peres] If the site is in contravention of the law or the government, I assume it will. [end recording]

The foreign minister made these remarks during a visit to Ma'alot a short while ago.

Meretz Threatens Coalition Crisis Over Budget Demands

TA2508180393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] The Meretz faction is threatening to create a government crisis unless its budget demands are met. In a meeting with the finance minister, the faction requested additions to the Meretz ministers' budgets and other allocations to the tune of hundreds of millions of shekels. As a result, the finance minister announced that in view of the accumulating—and possibly justified in some cases—demands from all the cabinet ministers, he was considering a request that the prime minister rule on the matter.

Minister Shulamit Aloni has called on the Meretz ministers to vote against the new state budget proposal. She argued that the budget proposal is an insult in view of all the promises made during the coalition crisis, in the wake of which she was ousted from the Education Ministry.

U.S. Warning on Contacts With Libya Reported

TA2508185593 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Earlier this month the United States delivered a stern warning to Israel to stop its efforts to establish contacts with Libya. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik has learned that the warning, worded in particularly strong language, came after the Americans learned—so they allege—that Israeli elements were pursuing their efforts to establish contact with Mu'ammar al- Qadhdhafi. This, despite the fact that the United States had already approached Israel on the issue a few months ago in the wake of the visit of the 200 Libyan Muslim pilgrims in Israel, a visit that ended on a jarring note.

The senior U.S. official who delivered the warning to Israel hinted that the efforts to establish such contacts came both from government and private elements, alluding to businessman Ya'aqov Nimrodi.

Associates of Nimrodi told our correspondent this evening that except for his involvement in bringing the pilgrims to Israel, he has had no contacts with Libya.

Embassy: No U.S. Criticism Received

TA2608050693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Sources in the Israeli Embassy in Washington say that no recent U.S. criticism was received at the embassy regarding contacts Israel is supposedly holding with Libya. Our correspondent in Washington Arye Golan notes that in the past the United States expressed dissatisfaction with the visit of Libyan pilgrims to Israel, and U.S. Administration officials regarded a rapprochement between Israel and Libya with disfavor. During the visit of Warren Christopher to the Middle East, Israeli leaders told him they have no intentions of forging ties with al-Qadhdhafi.

Deportation of South African Woman Confirmed

Ambassador Comments on Incident

TA2508144393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] The Interior Ministry has confirmed that an Egyptian resident with South African citizenship, Nozivo Mayekiso, was deported from Israel in the middle of July for subversive activity against the State of Israel. Reporter Harley Braidman asked South African Ambassador to Israel Malcolm Ferguson whether the incident and recent reports of financial misdemeanors by Israeli officials in South Africa had strained relations.

[Begin recording] [Ferguson] Well, in the last paragraph of the YEDI'OT AHARONOT article to which you refer, that suggestion is made, and I believe that to link relations between the two countries to the issues raised in that article in fact is a total misrepresentation of the position of our government. I can confirm, however, that the matters mentioned in the YEDI'OT AHARONOT article have been raised at high level in South Africa with Israel's Ambassador Dr. Alon Li'el.

[Braidman] So what you are saying is that the South African Government does not mind Israel's sort of having relations with the ANC [African National Congress]?

[Ferguson] Sure, the South African Government is involved in ongoing dicussions and planning of a new future for South Africa with the ANC. Of course the South African Government does not have any objections to the Government of Israel talking to and having a serious dialogue with the ANC. The ANC is going to be a major factor in South Africa's future.

[Braidman] Are the South Africans annoyed at not being informed earlier of the deportation of Nozivo Mayekiso?

[Ferguson] We were informed that the woman would be deported to South Africa. Irritation relates to the fact that she was deported before we had done a full citizenship check on her. She has never set foot in South Africa. She was born the daughter of a South African exile in

Egypt, and she has lived in Egypt all of her life. We were checking her citizenship. We were in the process of completing that examination, and she was deported.

[Braidman] You would not know where she was deported to?

[Ferguson] I have no idea. She was put on a flight to South Africa. [end recording]

'Close Contacts' With PLO Cited

TA2608152193 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 26 Aug 93 p 10

[Report by our correspondent in South Africa Pata Crost]

[Excerpt] Nozivo Mayekiso, the South African woman who was deported from Israel two weeks ago "due to security reasons," had close contacts with the PLO. Dr. Alon Li'el, Israel's ambassador to South Africa, and the South African Foreign Ministry have denied insinuations that the deported woman was a spy.

Although Dr. Li'el refrained from revealing details of the activities she is suspected of, he said that "the allegations against her are very serious, and the Israeli Government had good reason to deport her. The South African Embassy in Tel Aviv was informed in advance of the intention to deport the woman, and the South African authorities do not question Israel's motives." [passage omitted]

'Arafat Departs Amman Following 'Fruitful' Talks

JN2608081893 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0400 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Palestine President Yasir 'Arafat has praised the outcome of his visit to Jordan which he said was positive, fruitful, useful, constructive, and fraternal.

In statements to Jordan Television and the Jordanian News Agency before leaving Amman last night for Tunis, 'Arafat said he had detailed discussions with His Majesty King Husayn, the prime minister, and senior Jordanian officials, on all aspects of all issues, particularly the blessed Jordanian-Palestinian coordination, which is becoming stronger every day and on all levels. 'Arafat added: This coordination covers all aspects and fronts, including our joint action and the negotiations front. We consider negotiations another front on which we are fighting to defend the Palestinian and Arab rights under this new world order.

Asked about Israel's plan to withdraw from Jericho and Gaza and whether this plan had been discussed with the Jordanian side, 'Arafat said: I informed His Majesty King Husayn and the brother officials about all the information I have on this plan. We agreed to continue to jointly discuss this proposal. He stressed that the Palestinians refuse to have this option separated, and that it must be an indivisible part of the declaration of principles, which Jordan is interested in observing. He said: The Jordanian prime minister is very interested in adhering to this declaration. His advice to our delegation in the peace talks was in that direction.

Answering another question, 'Arafat said his talks in Amman also covered the bad conditions the Palestinian people are facing in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The talks also discussed Jerusalem's tragic condition and the Israeli Government's attempts to build more settlements around the holy city. He stressed these attempts would not help achieve peace.

'Arafat added: Jerusalem will, sooner or later, be the capital of Palestine. If they [the Israelis] consider Jerusalem a red line for them, it is also a red line for us. Jerusalem is not an issue that concerns Palestinians alone, but also Arabs, Muslims, and Christians everywhere.

'Arafat was seen off at Amman civilian airport by Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, Palestine Ambassador in Amman al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, and a number of Palestinian officials.

Al-Majali on Ties With Lebanon, Peace Process

JN2508195693 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1735 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Interview with Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali by an unidentified correspondent of Lebanese al-Mustaqbal Television in Amman; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] We welcome Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al- Majali, Jordan's prime minister, defense minister, and foreign minister. Sir, we are glad to have you on al-Mustaqbal Television.

We will begin with Lebanon. The Jordanian and Lebanese people feel that bilateral relations have not reached the level of both people's aspirations. In light of this, what is your assessment of bilateral relations? Will you take practical steps to strengthen cooperation, particularly since the government of Rafiq al-Hariri is moving in this direction?

[Al-Majali] In fact, we should emphasize that the Lebanese and Jordanian peoples have very close and deep-rooted relations. There has always been great harmony, mutual respect, and continuous consultation between his majesty the king and the Lebanese leadership.

Recently, Lebanon went through a painful civil war, and the Lebanese people suffered from its deep wounds. Jordan has always supported the brothers in Lebanon—people and government—and has never relinquished its role.

When Rafiq al-Hariri became the prime minister, we regarded this positively, believing that the economic and political situation would stabilize and the Lebanese people would begin to heal their wounds.

We in Jordan have told all our brothers that our hand is extended and our heart is open for continuity and solidarity in every way. Also, our stand on the peace talks was very supportive of our Lebanese brothers and Chief Delegate Suhayl Shammas. We always coordinated and expressed solidarity in our stands and in explaining these matters. We also cooperated in solving many problems that we faced.

Therefore, we view things with optimism and we continue to extend our hand. We have a feeling that, after making some arrangements, we will meet with Rafiq al-Hariri as soon as possible. The minister of agriculture and the minister of industry and trade visited Lebanon recently. Also, our brothers will come from Lebanon to discuss trade, industry, and agricultural affairs. We hope things will get better very soon.

As you know, in the past few months, Lebanon faced a crisis resulting from blatant Israeli aggression. Jordan's stand was clear from the first moment. We held the necessary contacts with the concerned parties to put pressure on Israel to stop the aggression against Lebanon, which lasted a long time. Praise be to God, the aggression stopped. We also hope that Lebanon will heal its wounds, and we are ready to support Lebanon and extend the material aid within our capability. We are also ready to supply them with cement. However, we are waiting for them to contact us, and we are ready to offer what we can.

[Correspondent] You have anticipated my next question, and that is about the reconstruction effort in south Lebanon and Jordan's contribution there. Let me ask

you about occupied southern Lebanon and resistance there. Since this is occupied territory, resistance is legitimate. Do you think resistance will have an impact on the peace process? What do you think the Arabs and, more particularly Israel, and the sponsors should do in this regard?

[Al-Majali] The so-called security zone is, in my opinion, artificial. It is the root cause of the problems between Israel and Lebanon. If and when Israel pulls back from the zone, it should be possible for the Lebanese Government to establish a real security presence on the border with Israel. The Israeli intransigence has been met in kind. Lebanese resistance is legitimate; a person defending his homeland is justified by all international laws. Occupation, on the other hand, is not. We think the Lebanese resistance is legitimate and all of us must recognize it as such. For peace to come to the area, occupation must go. There can be no peace as long as occupation continues. The Arab-Israeli negotiations are all about the removal of occupation from Lebanon, the Golan Heights, the Jordanian territories, and the Palestinian territories. Once occupation ends, peace will come.

[Correspondent] You have always said that you are optimistic about the prospects of some progress being made at the Arab-Israeli talks by year's end. What makes you so optimistic?

[Al-Majali] It is a question of temperament, to begin with. All the signs seem to say that the sponsors are really serious—the former U.S. Administration and the new one alike—as far as peace, permanent peace, in the region is concerned. And peace cannot endure unless it is fair. There can be no global economic stability when a volatile region that is home to oil fields is bedeviled by worry and turbulence. A just solution to the Palestinian question and a complete pullout from the occupied Arab territories are crucial to global economic stability.

On that point, both President Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher have made themselves absolutely clear. It takes time to sort out such a complex issue as this. That is what the talks over the past 20 months have addressed. We hope that all these things have ripened and matured, and that by year's end, we will see a green light, especially on the Palestinian track, and then the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. As far as we are concerned, we have worked out with the Israelis an agenda for the negotiations, and we stopped there pending progress on other tracks, the Palestinian track in particular. This is in order for all of us to move forward in tandem. We stand for a comprehensive settlement and a comprehensive peace. We do not believe in a unilateral solution for any side—on the Palestinian or on the Jordanian or the Syrian or Lebanese tracks. From the start of the process, we have always taken care to watch how the brothers are faring. When we decided that the pace of movement was somewhat slow, we stopped there in the interest of all the parties concerned.

[Correspondent] On the eve of the cordon states' meeting, we have reports on the idea of establishing an operations room, which will remain in session to coordinate among the Arab parties—coordination that Arab officials term very good. But those who follow these events notice that the Arab officials' talk falls short of that coordination. What is your comment on this?

[Al-Majali] We should understand what is meant by coordination. Is it being identical? Coordination is one thing and being identical is another. Coordination is for all parties to put a subject on the table, analyze it, and show their positions toward it. Then a discussion takes place. If solutions are identical, it will mean identicality and a unification. Otherwise, each party will know and will respect the other parties' positions, particularly when they feels that their positions will not be harmed. This is coordination. I believe that this has occurred in practice in an excellent manner, that is, in Washington over the past phase. It also took place during the meetings of the cordon states' ministers. There has always been agreement. Of course sometimes a dialogue took place and coordination efforts turned into attempts to impose a certain position. However, I believe that this gradually became stable.

[Correspondent] There are reports of a possible Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho. Will you please clarify this to us, and can you see light at the end of the tunnel, that is, the third phase you are talking about? What is the final status? Is it known to the Arab parties, Israel, and the sponsor? What is the final status?

[Al-Majali] What you hear about a withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho is not accurate. It was called an early empowerment that would take place before the end of the negotiations. First it was an attempt to transfer authority over all the occupied territories, them they began talking about Gaza. However, there is no clear discussion on whether there will be a withdrawal of all the armed forces from these territories or whether it is only an assumption of power as part of the interim self-government. This remains unclear, and we have no information to be able to say what is good or bad. Coordination with the Palestinian brothers in this round was very good, and they acquainted us with every thing. We hope that when this issue is proposed properly and studied sufficiently, they will acquaint us with it so that we can give our viewpoint on it.

Regarding the final status, His Majesty King Husayn clearly pressed the Americans on giving us a picture of what they mean by a transitional stage and what is going to follow. This should be defined. The picture may not be completely clear, but there should be at least outlines of the picture. Therefore, his majesty objectively explained the Arab mindset, which needs to see the final status. Our Arab mindset is that if we want to move from A to B, we should know the road and the end, because we fear that we will be lost in the desert, particularly if we are unarmed. This is our point of view.

The West views such matters differently. It views dynamism as marching ahead, without having to have a clear

vision of the final outcome. However, I believe that there is something that has begun to surface. It is a clear, definite, and serious attempt to recognize the Palestinian leadership. This is an important matter because it poses a major obstacle to the negotiations. Of course, Lebanon is a state, Syria is a state, and we are a state. But the brother Palestinians are not a state. Their leadership must be recognized so that when the Palestinian negotiators arrive at some conclusion they will be signing on behalf of a leadership. I believe that steps are being taken to arrive at that point. When we get to that point, I believe that the Palestinian track will move well.

[Correspondent] Confederation is a big issue for an upcoming stage. However, many forms of unity are being talked about. This issue has gained momentum now more than ever before. In the past, his majesty the king raised a concept of confederation: Two parliaments, two governments, and one central government in Jordan. Is there a mechanism for implementing this concept? What about the confederation?

[Al-Majali] Sir, the confederation issue is both old and new. It is old because it was discussed in the past and because it has various forms. There is no fixed form of a confederation anywhere in the world. More than two decades ago, his majesty the king proposed the United Kingdom plan, which called for a Palestinian state and a Jordanian state, each having its own identity, flag, anthem, constitution, parliament, and government. The two peoples would meet in agreement at a parliament. They would have a central government to supervise the economy, foreign affairs, and defense. This is an old plan. Regrettably, the first to resist it was Israel, and so did the West. Then, the brother Palestinians did not take it seriously. Occasionally, this issue is raised again. This is because the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship is a unique and very deep-rooted relationship. Therefore, this relationship must be put in the right formula to satisfy all the parties involved. A confederation may be one option, a federation another. However, raising this issue now and deciding it now would change the entire picture of the negotiations. The Palestinians accepted the so-called Madrid formula, which calls for a two-phased solution; a transitional phase leading to a final phase. If this subject is raised, the picture would be changed. On the other hand, while Jordan is a recognized state, the brother Palestinians have no state of their own yet. When such a state is set up, the question can be settled between two states. However, you cannot impose a proposal on the Palestinian people before they are fully free to say what they want to say. My personal view is that if the Palestinian people are given this freedom, they would want to have a very close relationship with Jordan. Such a relationship has many forms and aspects, which will be discussed when such a choice is made by the Palestinian people after they attain their freedom. But as for now, it would seem as if matters are being imposed on them. It is unacceptable to impose something, even it is useful.

[Correspondent] Public opinion in Jordan has recently been caught by the planned attempt on his majesty the king's life, which also sought to overthrow the regime. It has been announced that the Liberation Party—an Islamic party—was behind the plot. How serious is this affair? Do you think that the Islamic trend in Jordan has overstepped the limits of reason that it has held for quite a long time. We also know that there were the cases of the Mobilization group [where two deputies were charged with anti-state activities, tried, sentenced, and later pardoned by the king] and Muhammad's Army [an armed group caught and sentenced for anti-state activities, later pardoned]?

[Al-Majali] As you know, Islamic organizations have different agendas; let's not confuse their respective aims. The Mobilization group, Muhammad's Army, and the Liberation Party are to be distinguished from the Muslim Brotherhood or the Islamic Action Front. Each has its own aims, ways, and activities. The Liberation Party does not believe in any Arab system of government. It is, therefore, hostile to the regime, and hence the ban on the party. The party has engaged in such activities every now and then. It seems that some of them sought to change the regime, given that its leader has such stature and weight in Jordan that he is held to be the cornerstone. They wanted to destabilize the country through an attempt on the life of his majesty the king, because they recognize the popularity of the king and his style of government. You will find such people anywhere in the world, even in more advanced countries you will find plotters against the life of heads of state. The strange thing in this affair is that it involved university students. The naivete of their plans is also striking. Luckily, the watchful eye of our security services made sure that the plot was uncovered in time. Naturally, investigation took time. Outwardly the plot seemed to be limited, but appearances are sometimes deceptive. Investigation took its normal course and then the case was referred to the court. Sadly, self-styled democrats and human rights activists began to shout at the top of their voice that human rights ... [changes thought] These are students of a military university, wearing military uniforms. This kind of thing happens anywhere in the world, where such people are detained, investigated, and denied contacts with others. But this is not a case of human rights abuse. We are talking about an attempt on the life of the head of state. You prevent an attempt on his life by keeping people at bay and so stave off sedition, which God only knows where it would have led.

[Correspondent] Parliamentary elections are set to take place on 8 November. You have introduced an amendment to the election law, which some called a device to block an Islamic majority so that the government may control the new House of Representatives and push its programs through. What do you think? What were the justifications for amending the law?

[Al-Majali] Let me assure you that it has never been the intention of this government or his majesty the king to

marginalize any party. The move to bring back democracy to the country was initiated by his majesty the king himself through the disengagement with the West Bank. Thereupon it became possible to hold parliamentary elections.

People talk as if democracy has been created recently. Democracy existed in Jordan a long time ago. However, the occupation of one half of the country and the continuous military confrontation with Israel obstructed the establishment of a parliament. How can you establish a parliament while your lands have been occupied? One half of the country and one half of the people have been occupied since 1967. Therefore, it was difficult to establish a parliament. His majesty the king, however, took several measures, such as the establishment of a National Consultative Council, in order to compensate for this.

When the disengagement decision was made, however, it was possible to establish a parliament. As you know, the parliament was established, and Islamic and non-Islamic parties were represented in the parliament. Therefore, they are not the target of any measure and there is no intention to target them, because they are the sons of this country and they are concerned about this country just like this government, the previous government, and the next government are concerned about the country. The main thing is the intention, and there is no such intention.

The amendment was made because we felt that the old law was unconstitutional. I, for example, am registered in al-Karak for elections and have the right to elect nine deputies. If I change my address to Jarash, I will have the right to elect only two deputies; if I go the desert, I will elect only two; if I go to the Third District in Amman, Jabal Amman, I will elect five; and if I go to al-Salt or Irbid, I can elect seven or eight. Is it acceptable to anyone in the world that my election rights change with the change of my address or residence? The Jordanians are the same whether they are of Jordanian origin or Circassian origin, and whether they are Muslims or Christians. The Constitution says: All Jordanians have the same rights and duties regardless of their origin, religion, or race. Therefore, we are equal. So, how can I elect nine deputies while you can elect three in another area, and when I change my address the matter will become different? This is the amendment that we have made. It is an amendment only to ensure proper democracy and to end any violation of the Constitution. It is neither against them nor in their favor; it is also not aimed against others. This is a constitutional right. We only changed the plural to singular; that is, you elect one name instead of names, and any additional names will be canceled. This is what happened. However, some factions are making a clamor and complaining about injustice while the matter is very simple and does not tolerate any complications.

[Correspondent] My last question is an economic one. Is the ghost of debts still haunting Jordan? As we know, your government played a major role recently in rescheduling Jordan's debts at London Club and Paris Club. Would you give us details on this?

[Al-Majali] Jordan's debts are very high, but these debts are not the result of mismanagement. Jordan was supposed to receive commitments for its security forces as they are not for Jordan only, but for the region. Therefore, these forces received good support. When these commitments were not paid, we were exposed to these high debts. This is one of the most important causes of the debts. Of course, there are other economic matters.

For the past four years or more, the government has been carrying out a radical economic reform and the necessary stages for this reform have been achieved. World confidence in Jordan and in the Jordanian economy has become very high, and consequently, most of these debts were rescheduled for long periods so that they will not affect our economy and this will give us breathing room. We also hope that some of these debts will be canceled in one way or another to largely mitigate the burden on the Jordanian people so that they will continue with the good economic growth. Last year, the economic growth was 12 percent, which is considered a high rate in the world. The rate was satisfactory, and this year we hope the economic growth will be 8 percent. As you know, our country has been facing many difficulties. The last difficulty was the return of a large number of people [after the Gulf crisis] and more than 10 percent of the people returned to Amman in particular. This caused a great pressure on our economy. Many of the returnees also invested their money here, thereby, playing a role in the investment that took place last year.

[Correspondent] Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, thank you for this interview with the Lebanese al-Mustaqbal Television.

[Al-Majali] Thank you very much.

Opposition to Amended Election Law Said Growing

JN2408180293 Amman AL-AHALI in Arabic 23 Aug 93 p 2

[By Ramadan al-Rawashidah]

[Text] The approval last Tuesday, 17 August, by the Jordanian Government of the provisional law amending Electoral Law No. 26 of 1986 has brought all the parties—individuals and political forces alike—face-to-face with potentially far-reaching changes in the configuration of decisionmaking. These changes are deemed by some to be the most profound in Jordan's modern political history, and they come at at time featuring a projected Middle East settlement and cultural and economic normalization with Israel, in addition to economic issues and the democratic experience.

All these considerations were on the decisionmaker's mind when he opted for a controversial formula, namely the one person-one vote formula, and what it entails in

terms of reducing the key political forces in the country and producing a weak parliament to rubberstamp the upcoming deal without reservation.

Even the way the law was approved sounded bizarre. As of the evening of Monday, 16 August, rumors about an amendment were still circulating. Most of the ministers said then that no amendment had been proposed to the cabinet. That is true. According to Information Minister, Dr. Ma'n Abu-Nuwar, the decision was brought to the Council of Ministers on Tuesday, 18 August, at which time it was debated. The prime minister then explained the imperatives and rationale of the law. He was followed by the interior minister, who also presented an elucidiation of the law. The law was debated further and approved by the cabinet, and subsequently submitted to the king for his endorsement.

According to an informed political source, some ministers were taken aback by the presentation of the law to the cabinet on the morning of 18 August, when it was approved by a unanimous vote.

The source thinks that by proclaiming the amendment just after the king's address on the same day, the prime minister took cover under the address. The source further notes that none of the governments in Jordan's recent history have been the object of so much criticism.

Meanwhile, four leftist, pan-Arab parties released a brief statement to the press on Wednesday, 18 August, stating that "the provisional law clashes with democracy and the spirit of the Constitution, because it has failed to go through legislative channels and marked a retreat from a national dialogue promised by the government."

These parties; namely, the Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, the Jordanian People's Democratic Party (Hashd), the Jordanian Democratic Progressive Party, and the Jordanian Socialist Democratic Party have announced that they reserve the right to take appropriate measures regarding participation in the elections in accordance with this amended law, after referring the issue to their competent bodies. They also said that they, along with all forces that oppose this law, will take the government to court over this issue to render this law null and void.

The Jordanian Communist Party, whose position was deemed strange because it supported the amendment, which incorporated the one person-one vote formula into the law, did not sign the statement.

As for the Jordanian Democratic Popular Unity Party [JDPUP], it issued a press statement, saying that it is strange "that this amendment was introduced before the onset of the national dialogue promised by the official higher echelons of government." However, the JDPUP declared in the same statement that it will take part in the elections, which will be held in accordance with the amended law.

Opposition to the Election Law has mounted. Even figures affiliated with parties of the center, as well as some leading figures of conservative and liberal parties, opposed the new amendment. Former deputy 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Rawabidah is considered one of the opponents of this amendment, even though he is reported to have said the following after the amendment was issued: Now that the king has decided on the issue, I am no longer opposed to the amendment. Opposition to the amendment was also expressed by former Prime Minister Mudar Badran, former Prime Minister Tahir al-Masri, former deputy 'Abdallah al-Nusur, former deputy Samir Qa'war. Physicians Association Chairman Dr. Ishaq Maraqah also expressed opposition to the amendment.

Dr. Labib Qamhawi, a pro-democracy activist, said that any amendment to the Election Law should have aimed to render the existing Election Law more democratic and more representative of the demographic situation in Jordan. Qamhawi believes that the amendment is unfair because it views the election process from a single angle. He added that the amendment was "malicious." He also believes that the existing law [prior to its recent amendment] came about to prevent some sectors of the society from being fairly represented in the parliament. This is a clear indication, he noted, that the existing law was also malicious in terms of its motives.

Lawyer and former deputy Faris al-Nabulsi believes that this law is unconstitutional. He maintains that the Election Law is the most important law in any democratization process, noting that its issuance in accordance with a provisional law is unconstitutional.

Writer Tujan Faysal said: I don't think that this amendment is the result of a dialogue. It was a decision to adopt a viewpoint that enjoys neither a majority nor unanimity. If we wish to follow the letter and spirit of the Constitution, then we should increase the number of candidates for which a citizen can vote, and not decrease that number.

Mrs. Faysal criticized the official media, which have depicted the amendment as the outcome of dialogue and popular, democratic participation. She also said she finds it shocking that certain figures have changed their positions. These people, she says, were against the law before it was issued, but once it was issued, they voiced their support for, and blessing of, the law.

Meanwhile, the Shura Council of the Islamic Action Front will meet in the next few days to reach a decision on participation in the forthcoming parliamentary elections in the light of recent developments. A dispute is developing between the hawks and doves of the Islamic Action Front over participation in the next elections. Informed political sources say the front command is expected to support participation during the forthcoming meeting of the Shura Council, while certain observers believe such a stand by the command will deepen differences and may lead to a split by the hawks.

Taysir al-Zibri, the secretary general of the Jordanian People's Democratic Party, Hashd, said his party is

studying the new law with great concern and has not yet decided on participation. He said any stand in that regard will be decided by the majority of the party.

Al-Zibri said the approval of this law reflects an insistence by the executive branch to implement its own desires, regardless of the views of the political parties opposing the one-person-one-vote system based on the current constituencies, because this will create confusion among the people and prevent them from electing competent candidates on the basis of their programs.

Al-Zibri said the approval of this law goes against democracy, which is being boasted about every day.

House Dissolution, New Election Law Criticized

JN2508173993 Amman AL-FAJR AL-JADID in Arabic 24 Aug 93 p 1

[Editorial: "Those Who Do Not Learn From History!!"]

[Text] It was clear from the beginning that the sudden dissolution of the House of Representatives was intended to fabricate a justification for the Government to impose a provisional amended Election Law, in the absence of the legislative authority, in order to hold the elections under that law and on the basis of a one-man, one-vote system. The amendment took place under the pretext that it was meant to achieve equality among citizens. It, however, ignored other negative aspects of the law because they do not conflict with the interests of the executive authority.

While admitting that the Constitution can formally justify this series of measures [the dissolution of the parliament and the amendment to the Election Law], it cannot hide the fact that these measures date back to the situation that prevailed before 8 November 1989, when the executive authority used to give itself the right to enact legislation.

It is not difficult, therefore, to conclude that the results of the upcoming elections will secure a comfortable and suitable climate for the executive authority, when a new and obedient House of Representatives that lacks any noticeable opposition is elected.

While warning of the possible repercussions of such practices, we can say that the executive authority should have learned its lesson and avoided measures that conflict with democracy and may result in social tensions and explosions that can be dispensed with.

A wise saying points out that he who does not learn from history is doomed to repeat it.

Muslim Brotherhood Opts Out of Elections

JN2508091393 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 25 Aug 93 p 29

[By Sa'd al-Silawi]

[Text] Sources within the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood have said the movement will not take part in the forthcoming parliamentary elections, that no candidates will run in its name.

The sources told AL-RA'Y the decision not to participate in the elections was not prompted by the government's amendment of the Election Law to the one-man, one-vote system. Rather, it is meant to pave the way for the Islamic Action Front to take part in the elections.

Meanwhile, an informed source within the Islamic Action Front denied reports the Front plans to boycott the elections to protest the Election Law amendment.

A source within the Shura Council, the highest body in the front, said the Front's leadership asked 19 of its branches in the Kingdom to sound out views of Front cadres on participation and submit detailed reports to the leadership.

Indeed, at many meetings recently the subject of participation in the elections was brought up. The Shura Council will hold a meeting this week to discuss the results of studies by the branches and listen to all views on participation in the elections. The Shura Council is then expected to announce its decision on participation in the elections.

Sources say the Front, inspired by its concern for the higher interests of the homeland and supremacy of the law, will nominate candidates for the upcoming elections, based on certain qualifications that the candidate must have. The first of these qualifications is a commitment to the Islamic creed and the principles of the Islamic Action Front. The power and popularRty of the candidate in his district also count.

AL-RA'Y can confirm, citing reliable sources within the Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamic Action Front, that candidates of the Islamic Action Front will run for the elections in most election constituencies.

Shipping Agents To Assess Impact of Sanctions on Iraq

JN2508093093 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25 Aug 93 p 3

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—A meeting being held at the port city of al-Aqabah today is expected to focus attention on the severe blow Jordan's only sea outlet has suffered as a result of what officials describe as the overzealous enforcement of the sanctions against Iraq.

The meeting, which will bring together the agents of Sudan Shipping Lines in Europe and the Middle East, will also make a pitch towards convincing international shipping companies to resume their regular service to al-Aqabah.

"We will present a comprehensive report on the facilities and equipment available at al-Aqabah, which is a key port in the region despite the present setbacks," said Rimon Sulayman, assistant general manager of T. Gargour & Fils, agents of the Sudanese lines in Jordan.

The one-day meeting, attended by some 20 visitors in addition to local shipping officials and agents, will also hear reports about the impact of what many see as a de facto blockade of al-Aqabah as a result of the cumbersome inspection procedures and guidelines imposed by the enforcers of the sanctions against Iraq patrolling the Red Sea.

Translated into economic terms, these measures mean costly delays and diversions for al-Aqabah-bound ships. In turn, ship owners and charterers levy higher freight and related charges, making Jordanian imports artificially more expensive and leading to higher market prices for the consumer.

The delays also scramble production schedules of industrial units.

As a rule, shipowners and charterers quote higher freight charges for their ships to call at al-Aqabah; and this has also led to Jordan losing its competitive edge in the international phosphate and potash market, officials say.

Although Jordan's state-owned companies exporting phosphate and potash have not suffered losses, their profit margins have plunged since they have to buffer the higher freight factor in the net prices for the buyers.

The Sudan Shipping Lines, a government-owned company established in 1962, has a special interest in al-Aqabah because of the regular calls of its fleet at the Red Sea port.

It has been one of the shipping lines regularly "harassed" by the U.S.-led Naval task force patrolling the Red Sea, inspecting every vessel heading for and leaving al-Aqabah.

Despite what it sees as a deliberate targetting of Sudanese vessels in the enforcement campaign, the Sudanese firm has refused to suspend its services to Aqaba, said Mr. Sulayman of Gargour.

"In many cases, the company has declined to charge the importers the higher cost it incurred as a result of the diversion of al- Aqabah-bound cargo to other Red Sea ports such as Port Sa'id, Port Sudan, Hodeida, Jeddah and Suez," he said.

By design or coincidence, a Sudanese shipping line vessel carrying iron pipes was among the first vessels to be intercepted and blockade from proceeding after the sanctions went into force. Since then almost every Sudanese ship calling at al-Aqabah has had some or another problem with the enforcers.

More than 40 international shipping lines had regular service to Aqaba prior to the Gulf crisis. The number has now dwindled to 15.

"We believe the al-Aqabah meeting will be an excellent opportunity to present Jordan's case to international shipping agents," said Mr. Sulayman.

"We have to convince the international shipping community of the significance of al-Aqabah and of the wisdom on resuming and opening regular services to the port,"

Attending the al-Aqabah meeting will be Al-Aqabah Ports Corporation Director-General Durayd Mahasinah and Sudan Shipping Lines Chairman 'Ali Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahim along with senior management aides.

Phosphate Mines Company To Diversify, Expand

JN2208140893 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 22 Aug 93 p 7

[By a JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—The Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC), a mostly government-owned organisation and the Kingdom's leading foreign exchange earner, plans to increase it capital to facilitate expansion plans, the company said Saturday.

The precise amount of the proposed capital rise was not officially confirmed, but it involves 9.8 million shares to be floated in the market.

Reports said the JD 1 papar-value shares will be sold at around JD 4 each—equivalent to the market value of the share.

At present the Jordan Investments corporation and the Social Security Corporation—two state-run agencies—own 41.5 per cent and 27.6 per cent respectively of the stock of the JPMC.

The paid-up capital of the company is JD 34,200,000. The JPMC assets were estimated to be worth JD 267 million and share-holder's equity was estimated to be worth JD 157 million at the end of 1991. Figures for 1992 were not immediately available.

The JD 9.8 million par-value proceeds from the new floation of shares will be added to the capital of the company while the JD 3 million in premium will be added to the reserves of the company and used to finance expansion and production diversification projects, according to the reports.

JPMC Director-General Thabit al-Tahir said the projects were warranted by "the changing demands in the international market towards readymade fertilizers and byproducts."

In written comments to the JORDAN TIMES, Mr. al-Tahir noted that the expansion projects were decided upon by the board of directors of the JPMC several years ago.

The focus of expansion will be the al-Shidiyah mines in the south, which is estimated to hold one billion tonnes of good quality rock phosphates, and the JPMC's fertilizer plant and chemical complex at al-'Aqaba, Mr. al-Tahir said.

"The al-Shidiyah mines will be the main manufacturing complex of the JPMC beginning in the year 2,000," Mr. al-Tahir said. By that time, production at other phosphate mines would have gone down.

He noted that al-Shidiyah also had the advantage of better transport costs since it is close to the port of al-'Aqaba. Furthermore, its distance from population centres offers protection against environmental problems, he said.

Total investment in the first phase of expansion is estimated at JD 130 million to be raised through external loans from various European, Arab and international funding agencies, he said.

The Kuwaiti Fund of Economic and Social Development reneged on a pledge of JD 29 million financing to the project after the Gulf crisis, and thus the need for the JPMC to raise local funds to make up for the gap, Mr. al-Tahir said.

The JPMC chief said JD 55 million were already spent on developing al-Shidiyah mines and that another JD 75 million were needed in the next two years. The first phase of the expansion is expected to be completed in the fourth quarter of 1995.

The $47 million expansion at the JPMC complex at al-'Aqaba involves raising the production of ammonium phosphate to 750,000 tonnes every year from the present 600,000 tonnes by 1993. This will lead to the plant consuming 1.3 million tonnes of phosphate from the present consumption of 900,000 tonnes.

Also included is the renovation and modernisation of the phosphoric acid, ammonium flouride and sulphur plants at al-'Aqaba.

Mr. al-Tahir noted that the JPMC shares in two joint venture projects—a phosphoric acid plant in colliboration with an Indian company and a complex fertilizer plan in collaboration with a Japanese consortium—were $32 million. Part of the proceeds from the new shares to be floated will be channelled to these two projects, collectively worth $320 million, Mr. al-Tahir said.

"These are major capital investment projects involving local production," Mr. al-Tahir noted. "These will open new horizons for Jordanian exports in addition to helping diversifield production avenues and cutting production costs."

"In view of the necessity to provide the needed capital to continue implementing the projects, and in view of the difficulties in raising local/foreign loans, the JPMC board of directors have decided to increase the capital (of the company) with floating 9.8 million shares," the company statement said. "This will guarantee the implementation of the projects without delay and according to the timetable agreed with the international institutions participating in the projects and the needs of the international phosphate and fertilizer market."

The rest of the financing needs of the company will be raised through "self-financing," it added.

The statement named some of the Arab and international institutions assisting the project. These included the Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development, the International Monetary Fund, the Islamic Development Bank, the German Construction Bank and the Austrian Development Bank.

Despite a depression in the international phosphate market, JPMC has managed to retain and slightly increase its share of the market, Mr. al-Tahir said last month.

Overall profits of the company have gone down as a result of a slump in international prices and stiff competition put up by North African producers such as Morocco.

Another factor affecting the profits of the JPMC is the additional freight and insurance costs incurred on ships sailing to al-'Aqaba.

The additions are imposed by ship-owners and charterers as a result of the costly delays and other direct and indirect impact of what officials describe as overzealous inspections and guidelines set by the American-led warships patrolling the Red Sea to enforce the international sanctions against Iraq.

Al-Majali Urges Media Neutrality During Elections

JN2508165393 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1600 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali has emphasized the importance of neutrality by the Ministry of Information and its departments in the forthcoming elections. Dr. al-Majali, speaking to department heads at the Information Ministry during a visit, reviewed the development of the peace process and reiterated Jordan's stand on achieving a just and comprehensive peace based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

The prime minister added: Jordan will do all that it can to aid the Palestinians in regaining their legitimate rights on all their national soil.

Dr. al-Majali also called for better mass media presentations by improving knowledge of the facts and sources before formulating messages.

Press Association 'Not Consulted' on Journalism Code

JN1908143493 Amman THE STAR in English 19 Aug 93 p 1, 2

[By Andrew Jeffreys; "Special to THE STAR"]

[Text] Controversy over a proposed press code of honor was heightened after the release of a statement on Monday by Mr Sulayman al-Qudah, president of the Jordanian Press Association (JPA), declaring that the association was not consulted before the draft code was released by Minister of Information Ma'n Abu-Nuwar earlier in the week.

"I disagree with the code," Mr al-Qudah told THE STAR. "He (Abu-Nuwar) did not have the right to release it. It must come from within the journalist profession itself."

Mr Abu-Nuwar said the code of honor is a framework of principles around which journalists in the country should base their reporting. The two-page document includes clauses about the 'respect of citizens' honor and dignity', 'support for higher national and humanitarian interests' and 'respect for human rights'. Mr Abu-Nuwar said that after discussions with the JPA, he hoped its members would adopt the code, which would become a provision of the Press and Publications and the JPA laws.

Observers say that the minister's document is intended to deal with current "problems" in the new press law by setting clearer limits on reporting, and putting the responsibility of pursuing "offending" journalists into the hands of a self-regulating body—thus taking pressure off the Government.

In an interview with THE STAR, Dr Abu-Nuwar was indifferent to the strong reactions his proposal had produced. "I had not intended to dictate anything to anyone," Mr Abu-Nuwar said. "This code of ethics is a reaction to what has happened in Jordan, where certain journalists have lied" and are accused of "incitement to rebellion. The law is to protect the good name of journalism in this country and the freedom of the press."

Reacting to Mr al-Qudah's rejection of what he described as 'interference in its (JPA) Affairs', Dr Abu-Nuwar stressed "after extensive consultations, the JPA can either accept the code as it is, or amend it or even rewrite it."

Mr al-Qudah said that the JPA already has its own internal regulations based on the 1972 Arab Press Charter. "We are therefore already bound by two laws; the JPA regulations and the press law."

Responding to the JPA statement, Dr Abu-Nuwar said, "the journalists' ethics of 1972 was made by a majority of dictatorships in the Arab world. It eludes the issue of human rights which I have insisted on in the Jordanian code."

Not all journalists were as hostile as JPA to the proposal. Dr Nabil al-Sharif, editor of AL-DUSTUR, told THE STAR that he supported "the opportunity the code offers to solve the problems within the journalist profession." He continued that the best point is that the proposal stressed the need "for us to come up with the necessary debate. It was not dictated and when completed will help curb contraventions before they reach the court."

Others, however, have been more cynical. Mr. Jamil al-Nimri, editor of AL-AHALI, the mouthpiece of Hashd and one of the papers judged to have surpassed the law, described the proposed code of ethics as a "joke", believing that "the Government wants to appear not to interfere, by making us make a commitment not to pass their limits." He agreed that the principles themselves were honorable, but said, "that is not the point—the point is the (press) law itself, and we cannot continue under its intimidation." The lifting of certain reporting restrictions has been an intrinsic part of the democratization process in Jordan. The law allowed new newspapers to set up and handed the power to judge breaches of it to civil courts. It has been the new party newspapers that have been testing the limits of the law in an attempt to establish themselves in the increasingly competitive market. Although certain articles in the law, notably 40(B) banning "any reference that 'touches' (the official English translation is offends') the security services", appear restrictive, the Government now has to face a long and public case if it wants to sue, and in practice has usually settled with a threatening letter. It would undoubtedly prefer to see the numerous borderline cases dealt with internally, allowing it to concentrate on the serious contraventions in court.

The problem is that at the present time, not all journalists are actually members of the JPA, and thus cannot be regulated by it. it is a declared objective of Mr al-Qudah to see membership become all-encompassing in the profession. Until this occurs, any kind of self-regulatory system cannot function, particularly as the majority of breaches have come from journalists outside the JPA.

Internal punishments are expected to include suspension or removal of JPA status, though Dr Abu-Nuwar would not be drawn into a discussion on such specifics. "I have not even considered particular punishments," he said, "I wanted honor to play the main part in it."

Whether or not the JPA eventually does produce its own version of the 'code of honor', there is no doubt that the present system of seeing cases through the civil courts is too time consuming. Mr al- Qudah believes that there must be 'a specialist court for the press that would make the process of legal action faster and more efficient.' Dr Abu-Nuwar is in agreement with the idea in principle.

Despite the JPA's rejection of the code, and Dr Abu-Nuwar's intention not to push it any further without a

consensus in the profession, pressure for a clearer demarcation in the law and for a greater degree of self-regulation will persist. It seems likely that at least some of his suggestions will be incorporated into proposals for a new press law, being drafted at the present time by the JPA, which will be presented to the Government during the next Parliament.

Al-Safadi Appointed Jordanian News Agency Director General

JN2208144193 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 22 Aug 93 p 1

[Text] Amman—It has been decided to appoint 'Ali al-Safadi, currently the prime minister's information adviser, as director general of the Jordanian News Agency, PETRA, and to appoint Khalid Mahadin, the current PETRA director, as his successor.

'Ali al-Safadi worked as PETRA director general from 1986 to 1992, when he was appointed as information adviser at the Prime Ministry.

News Agency, Publication Department Directors Appointed

JN2508112993 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 25 Aug 93 p 1

[Text] The Council of Ministers has decided to appoint Muhammad Amin as director of the Press and Publication Department to succeed 'Isa al-Jahamani, who was retired.

The council also decided to appoint 'Abdallah al-'Utum as director general of the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY. Al-'Utum will succeed Khalid Mahadin, who was appointed an adviser at the Prime Ministry.

Eight Ambassadors To Conclude Tours 1 Oct

JN2508092393 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 25 Aug 93 p 1

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—Eight Jordanian ambassadors abroad will be transferred to the Foreign Ministry as of Oct. 1, according to informed sources. The sources said the ambassadors involved are Khalid al-Madadihah (Bonn), Samir al-Khalifah (Athens), Nabil al-Talhuni (Vienna), Shahir Bak (Madrid), Nayif al-Hadid (Damascus) Nayif al-Qadi (Doha), Nasir al-Batayinah (Riyadh) and Ahmad al-'Adaylah (Sanaa). The sources added that those ambassadors had completed their terms and that new appointments will be announced soon.

Buwayz Reacts to Rabin's 'Conditions' on South

NC2508132093 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1130 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] On the eve of the meeting of the foreign ministers of the Arab states concerned with the peace process, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin set three conditions to tackle the situation in the south. The conditions are: disarm Hizballah, make security arrangements, and abstain from prosecuting Lahd's militia [South Lebanese Army, SLA].

AFP today cited a senior Israeli official as saying that Israel is willing to pull out from south Lebanon in six to nine months after the Lebanese Army has deployed along the border strip, Hizballah has been disarmed, and peace has been restored. The official remarked that Prime Minister Rabin presented that proposal to the U.S. secretary of state during the latter's tour of the region. He added that Rabin also requested that the Lebanese Government integrate Lahd's militia and abstain from prosecuting SLA elements.

The official added that Rabin told Christopher that once these conditions are met, Israel will not only comply with Resolution 425, it will also sign a peace treaty with Lebanon.

For his part, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz remarked that Rabin's words represent a step backward from what was viewed as progress at a certain stage, as well as a stab at the principles of the Madrid peace conference.

Buwayz added that the timing of that statement, on the eve of the 11th round of peace negotiations, raises questions about the hopes attached to that round. We hope these remarks were meant for the domestic Israeli front and not the foreign front, he said.

If Rabin's words fall within the context of maneuvers—in politics, maneuvers are essential. However, he added, if these words are serious, we affirm that they are a clear step backward from the principles of the Madrid conference and the recent proposals that talked about the coming round.

Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri has denied his knowledge of such a proposal, which Christopher is said to have conveyed to Lebanon. No one mentioned what Rabin hopes for, Birri said.

Rabin Remarks 'Departure' From Progress

NC2508153993 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1300 GMT 25 Aug 93

[News conference by Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz with unidentified correspondents—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] What is your comment on Rabin's statement about the situation in south Lebanon?

[Buwayz] No doubt, the statement Rabin made today constitutes a departure from what was viewed as progress at a certain stage. It also represents a stab at the principles of the Madrid peace conference. The timing of that statement, on the eve of the 11th round of negotiations, raises a question about the hopes attached to that round. We hope that these remarks were meant for local Israeli consumption rather than foreign consumption.

[Correspondent] Why were such remarks made at this particular time?

[Buwayz] If these words fall within the context of maneuvers, in politics maneuvers may lie an essential part of political instruments. But if these words are serious, I reiterate that this is a clear departure from the principles of the Madrid conference and the recent proposals concerning the next round.

[Correspondent] What are your expectations from the meeting of the cordon states' foreign ministers?

[Buwayz] This meeting is special because it comes before the 11th round. The United States has made diligent efforts to pave the way to attain the required objectives. Hence, this meeting might deal with issues that are more delicate and clearer than those discussed in previous meetings.

We hope the Palestinian brothers will unify their ranks and cooperate with the other Arab parties in a way that safeguards Arab rights and ensures the unity of the stand vis-a-vis the next round.

[Correspondent] [Words indistinct]

[Buwayz] This round was expected to achieve, perhaps, specific progress, though the features of this progress have so far been ambiguous. The U.S. efforts accompanying the preparations for this round indicated that there was a possibility of achieving certain progress. However, Rabin's statement today about the Syrian and Lebanese files does not imply that there is a final stand. It rather proposes basic contradictions to what was previously agreed upon and to what were believed to be constants.

[Correspondent] Where will the cordon states meeting be held?

[Buwayz] In Beirut. There are some logistic arrangements that must be completed within the next few hours.

[Correspondent] Did all the Arab foreign minister tell you that they will personally attend this meeting?

[Buwayz] There are delegations from all the Arab sides and these delegations are led by the foreign ministers.

[Correspondent] [Words indistinct]

[Buwayz] All ideas linked to the peace process are now clear to all sides. These ideas are considered constants. What remains is that these ideas should be crystallized and utilized more meticulously. When we say they are constants, we mean that abiding by them is [word indistinct].

[Correspondent] What [word indistinct] your response to the Israeli proposal for establishing a military committee between Lebanon and Syria?

[Buwayz] We have often said that Lebanon refuses to establish a military committee with unknown objectives and responsibilities. We believe that the need for setting up a military committee will become essential when Israel abides by the principle of withdrawal from all occupied Lebanese territories. Then the committee's task will be to draw up a timetable and program for this withdrawal. But if the committee's objective is general and ambiguous, we will never agree to establish it.

[Correspondent] [Words indistinct]

[Buwayz] I have repeatedly said that as long as there is occupation in Lebanon, the resistance will remain a legitimate right of all Lebanese people. When definite and clear guarantees free of any ambiguity or plays on words, as is the case today in Rabin's statement concerning withdrawal from the Golan and withdrawal on the Golan, the Lebanese state will shoulder its responsibilities in this regard.

[Correspondent] What is your comment on the talks held with his highness the amir of Kuwait yesterday?

[Buwayz] The talks were held between two fraternal countries linked by profound, firm, and continuing relations. They are also linked with multifaceted relations from the political, economic, and manpower aspects. There are various common interests. Lebanon was one of the first states to adopt a clear-cut stand on the issue of the invasion and occupation of fraternal Kuwait. Hence, the talks dealt with various political and economic topics and with bilateral cooperation and regional issues concerning the two countries.

[Correspondent] [Words indistinct].

[Buwayz] Contacts are under way among all the Arab sides, particularly between Lebanon and Syria. This visit falls within this context.

[Correspondent] Do you expect a new Israeli (?attack) [words indistinct] and do you have any information in this regard?

[Buwayz] I do not believe that Israel has ever supplied the Foreign Ministry with advance information on operations. What I can say is that the situation in the south is still tense, though at varying levels. This is what we have to say now.

Cabinet Session Reviews Regional Contacts, TV Issue

NC2508201593 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1915 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Statement by Information Minister Michel Samahah following a Cabinet meeting on 25 August in Beirut—recorded]

[Excerpts] The Cabinet held its weekly meeting at the Government House this afternoon. President Ilyas al-Hirawi chaired the session. At the outset of the session, al-Hirawi welcomed Minister Jean 'Ubayd and commended his qualifications and political experience, which would, as al-Hirawi put it, enrich the Cabinet meetings.

Al-Hirawi then commented on the Kuwaiti amir's visit to Lebanon yesterday and the talks held with his highness. The amir thanked Lebanon for its support to Kuwait during its crisis. The amir voiced his own support to Lebanon in view of Israel's repeated attacks against our country, the president told the Cabinet.

Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri briefed the cabinet on the tour he and the Arab League secretary general made of Syria, Bahrain, Qatar, and Oman and the talks they held with senior officials in these countries. Al-Hariri said that the leaders of these countries voiced commitment to the resolutions passed by the Arab foreign ministers conference concerning assistance to Lebanon. Al-Hariri said that he will continue his visits to Arab countries next week.

The Cabinet accepted the financial grant presented by Oman to the Lebanese University and thanked the Omani sultan for the gift. [passage omitted]

The Cabinet then discussed the relationship between the state and the Lebanese Television Company. The Cabinet emphasized that the information minister is entitled to supervise all the news and political programs on Lebanese Television in accordance with Clause 2 of Constitutional Decree No. 25 dated 26 March 1983. [passage omitted]

SLA Commander Denies Plan To Leave for France

TA2508160993 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 25 Aug 93 p 2

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Smadar Peri]

[Text] SLA [South Lebanese Army] Commander General Antoine Lahd yesterday denied planning to leave south Lebanon for France.

The report about Lahd's intention was published by the Lebanese newspaper AL-SAFIR, which claimed that the general was planning to "defect" to Paris without the Israeli Government's knowledge. "Anyone who wants to believe AL-SAFIR is welcome to do so," the SLA commander told visitors at his Marj 'Uyun home yesterday. "I have no plans to go away or defect."

The newspaper report about Lahd's "plans" was published just a few days after that same paper's editor ran an interview with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, who attacked the SLA. A senior Defense Ministry source said in reaction: "I do not think Lahd either plans or wants to leave, and even if he did want to leave, I do not believe he would be granted political asylum in France. Ten days

ago, a similar report was published in the framework of the psychological warfare Beirut is waging against the SLA commander."

General Lahd's wife and two children have lived in France in the past two years because adequate schools for his daughter and son were unavailable in south Lebanon.

IDF, SLA Exchange Fire With 'Terrorists'

TA2508162193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Heavy fire exchanges are now taking place between the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and SLA [South Lebanese Army] and terrorists in south Lebanon. Lebanese sources have told our correspondent Yo'av Aviv that two powerful blasts were heard east of al-Qantarah this afternoon. Immediately after that, terrorists fired mortar shells, and the IDF and the SLA began heavy shelling. No casualties were reported in the security zone.

This morning terrorists attacked an SLA position with RPG's and light weapons fire. Amal assumed responsibility for the attack. It has been learned from Lebanon that in a retaliatory shelling by the SLA, two villagers from al-Rumani were injured and several houses were damaged.

Al-Asad Said To Back Accord With Israel 'In Principle'

TA2608080493 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 26 Aug 93 p A1

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[Excerpt] Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad recently told a Ba'th Party forum in Damascus that Syria has already decided in principle to reach an arrangement, and that now he is dealing with "the details of peace" with Israel. Al-Asad's declaration, which was relayed to Jerusalem by Western elements, accords with what a senior official defined yesterday as "the slow but permanent process of educating the top Syrian echelon toward the possibility of an arrangement with Israel."

Political sources in Jerusalem said yesterday, however, that al-Asad's declarations on the issue of peace so far have not deviated from what is defined in Jerusalem as a state of nonbelligerency. It is assessed that progress on this issue will be achieved only via a U.S. shuttle mission, expected to take place during September, following the upcoming round of peace talks in Washington slated to open next Tuesday [31 August].

A Japanese official who recently spent time in Damascus last week said in Jerusalem that Japan believes al-Asad does not merely want to regain the Golan Heights, but also seeks economic and military aid to the same tune that Egypt receives, as well as the removal of Syria from the list of terror-supporting countries. The Japanese official and his Israeli interlocutor expressed the concern that the United States will find it hard to meet Syria's financial demands.

The Japanese official also voiced the assessment that "U.S. patience regarding the peace process" will wear thin within six months, and also that the United States does not possess the necessary resources to finance all the multilateral plans in the offing. [passage omitted]

PLO's Qaddumi Meets With al-Shar', Opposition Groups

JN2508141893 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Sana' al-Imam dispatch from Damascus]

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' received Faruq Qaddumi, the head of the PLO Political Department, a short while ago. The talks are expected to deal with the internal Palestinian situation, the PLO's current situation, the crises that the PLO has been facing recently, and the coming round of the peace talks.

Informed Palestinian sources told Radio Monte Carlo that the visit to Syria by Faruq Qaddumi, who arrived here yesterday, is aimed at lessening the opposition and its escalating stand, in light of the crisis through which the PLO is passing. For this purpose, Qaddumi met this morning with Abu-'Ali Mustafa [Mustafa al-Zibri], deputy secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], and Nayif Hawatimah, secretary general of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP]. Both of these groups' sources renewed their denunciation of the recent steps taken in the peace talks, particularly the concessions on the issue of Jerusalem and the option of Gaza-Jericho First. The two fronts said that this option will not lead to a Palestinian state or to withdrawal from the rest of the occupied Palestinian territories. The two fronts said that this serious concession by the PLO will produce more problems within the PLO Executive Committee.

The DFLP asserted that there is certain information about American-Israeli attempts to peddle the plan of partial implementation of self-rule and early empowerment in the occupied territory.

The PFLP noted that Qaddumi is not bringing any new proposals and that he admits the existence of a problem—although saying it was settled—created by the contacts held by PLO without the knowledge of the negotiating team. In a statement issued today, the PFLP said that the PLO Executive Committee's meeting in Tunis tomorrow will be confined to the members of the committee to discuss the financial, organizational, and administrative affairs. The PFLP added that if 'Arafat objects to this, the members of the committee will boycott the meeting and issue a comprehensive memorandum. Meanwhile, some members of the committee are considering resignation like al-Hut and Darwish.

Afternoon Round of Talks Held

JN2508160793 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Damascus—A round of talks was held this afternoon between a Syrian delegation, led by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', and a Palestinian delegation, led by PLO Political Department Chief Faruq Qaddumi. Nasir Qaddur, the minister of state for foreign affairs, and Mahmud al-Khalidi, the chief of the PLO office in Damascus took part in the talks.

The two sides reviewed the peace process and the new developments in the Palestinian arena. The two sides also exchanged views and held consultation on the coordination meeting of the Arab parties involved in the peace process to be held in Beirut on 27 August.

Commentaries Focus on 11th Round of Peace Talks

AL-BA'TH Views Israeli 'Falsehoods'

JN2308061693 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 23 Aug 93

[From the press review]

[Text] Commenting on Israel's falsehoods prior to the 11th round of the peace talks, AL-BA'TH says: A few days before the resumption of the peace talks, several

Zionist officials of different political shades have started talking bitterly about their willingness to make certain concessions.

While actively seeking to market this notion domestically and internationally, those Zionist officials launched a parallel campaign related to the role of their military establishment, especially in southern Lebanon.

AL-BA'TH goes on: There are several facts which cannot be obliterated by Israeli falsehoods, whatever the skills involved. Among these is the fact that the term concessions being repeated by several Zionist officials are absolutely out of place. An occupier of a territory does not own it, and, therefore, cannot claim to be making territorial concessions. Besides, the international resolutions issued by UN organizations on the Arab-Israeli conflict explicitly stipulate Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. In all languages, the word withdrawal means the territory has legitimate owners and the occupier should leave this territory, not make territorial concessions. So why are the Zionists using the word concessions?

As for the role of the occupation army, given that many Zionists are competing to highlight various views about it and about its opposition of Lebanese resistance, this question complements the policy of aggression and disregard for historical facts.

AL-BA'TH says this question carries its own seeds of destruction and collapse, because resistance is a natural, inevitable outcome of occupation. If Israeli politicians and military leaders want to spare themselves the trouble of a public debate—which is thought out in advance—about the role of the army in opposing the resistance, all they have to do is withdraw their troops and hardware from the south. By doing so, they would be implementing Resolution 425 and putting an end to their differences, if there are any.

AL-BA'TH concludes: If we look at Israeli claims about territorial concessions and the tasks of the army from another angle, we will find that these claims are deliberately timed to precede the 11th round of peace talks in order to put more obstacles to it, as part of continued Israeli maneuvers and intransigence to avoid the obligations of peace. Certainly, we have no doubt at all that this view is correct, because Israel does not work for peace but only sheds tears over it.

Next Round To Prove 'Decisive'

JN2508182093 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Once again, Israeli officials are making provocative statements about Israel's determination not to fully withdraw from the occupied Arab territories. These statements are aimed at spreading pessimism about the 11th round of talks, which are proposed to be held in Washington at the end of this month, and to curb the optimism created by the active U.S. role and the United States' commitment to making every effort in achieve tangible results this time.

Observers have noticed that these statements were deliberately timed to coincide with the run up to the meeting of the foreign ministers of Arab countries concerned with the peace process, which is set 27 August in Beirut. Israel's Prime Minister announced that the Israeli occupation forces will not fully withdraw from the Syrian Golan Heights, even in exchange for a full peace with Syria. As usual, Yitzhaq Rabin talked about withdrawal within the Golan and not from the Golan. Withdrawal within the Golan means partial withdrawal, which is something that Syria rejected in the past and continues to reject. The Golan cannot be bargained on or negotiated over. Syria will not relinquish an iota of soil or any national or pan-Arab right. It has repeatedly explained its stand on every occasion and the past 10 rounds of negotiations attest to the fact that Syria's stand is principled and constant.

From this perspective, Israel's maneuvers will be useless. Syria will not submit to blackmail. If the Israelis want peace, then the Golan must be fully returned to Syria. The Israelis' claim that they are working toward peace and their announcement of such provocative statements reinforce the conviction in the region that Israel's participation in the peace process is no more than a maneuver and that the United States must impose the realities of the desired just and comprehensive solution. Peace will be impossible without the enactment of the UN Security Council resolutions.

The Arabs want the 11th round—if held—to be decisive in terms of ending Israeli intransigence, which has so far prevented any progress, and in terms of dealing with substantive issues, led by the issues of full withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and the implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions that form the bases of the peace process.

We do not believe that anyone wants the proposed 11th round to be held in a climate of Israeli intransigence and end with the same results as the past rounds. In the aftermath of the large-scale Israeli attack on Lebanon, the world saw the gravity of the volatile situation in the Middle East in its display of human tragedy and its aim to destroy the peace process in the region.

Although the Arabs are displaying a great sense of responsibility, their concern about peace cannot continue while Israel is trampling the peace process under foot, showing disdain for its international sponsorship, and deliberately planting mines in order to abort any possible progress.

There is no doubt that when the foreign ministers of the Arab countries directly concerned with the peace process meet in Beirut, they will reaffirm the pan-Arab constants, which strengthened during the Israeli attack on Lebanon. During this attack, Lebanon showed itself to

be as committed to its rights as ever. Moreover, Syria and Lebanon demonstrated their adherence to a united stand, and pan-Arab solidarity manifested itself in an Arab willingness to take part in rebuilding what was destroyed by the wicked Israeli aggression.

The Arabs are negotiating from a strong rather than a weak position. The rulers of Israel are wrong if they think that they can continue their policy of blackmail and procrastination. The 11th round—if held—will prove decisive; it will either produce real peace or expose Israel to the world as a deceptive entity that rejects peace and is deeply involved in the policy of aggression and expansion.

Syrians Shoot at Israeli Crop Duster 25 Aug

NC2608065693 Paris AFP in English 0558 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Jerusalem, Aug 26 (AFP)—Syrian soldiers fired automatic weapons at an Israeli crop-spraying plane which inadvertently crossed the disengagement line in the southern Golan plateau on Wednesday [25 August], military officials said Thursday.

The light aircraft was not hit and the pilot, who was unharmed, landed safely on the Israeli side.

It was the first time in many years that Syrians had shot at an Israeli plane which strayed over the 1974 disengagement line, the officials said.

Kuwaiti Amir Resumes Talks With al-Asad, Departs

JN2508134693 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Excerpt] President Hafiz al-Asad and His Highness Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, amir of the State of Kuwait, resumed talks at 1015 today in a closed session held at Tishrin Palace, Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah's place of residence. The official Kuwaiti delegation, along with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Information Minister Dr. Muhammad Salman, and Syrian Ambassador to Kuwait Mustafa al-Haj 'Ali later joined the meeting.

During the meeting, the two sides finished discussing the topics tackled in the previous two meetings, as well as issues branching from these topics. They also dealt with the situation and developments in the regional and Arab arenas and bilateral relations.

His Highness Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah left Damascus at 1230 today after a three-day visit to the Syrian Arab Republic.

President Hafiz al-Asad led those who bid him farewell at Damascus International Airport. [passage omitted]

Columnist Questions Motives Behind Somalia Operation

JN2108154093 Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 12 Aug 93 p 3

[From the "With the Events" column by 'Abd-al-Karim 'Abd-al-Rahim: "Why Somalia...?!]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Question: Why did the United States pick out Somalia—an Arab League member—for the deployment of that many multinational forces...?! Was it so that instead of Somalis being killed by other Somalis, they might be slaughtered by multinational forces? Was it so that instead of starving to death, Somalis might be killed by helicopter gunships and beer-swigging troops holding forth about humanitarian assistance?!

A war is going on in Angola, where bodies are said to be littering the streets. According to a Western report, Angolans have taken to eating cockroaches, while their diet for months had been tree roots. Angola is said to be reeling from a severe shortage of medicine, water, electricity, and supplies. Why does the United Nations fail to intervene there? Of all the African states beleagured by hunger, bullets, and drift, why Somalia...?

Could it be that the decision to intervene in Somalia was swayed by its [Arab] affiliation...? Is it right that the Somalis should be killed if they said no to the interference? Where is it written that the United Nations has a free hand to meddle in the internal affairs of other states with the benefit of brute force...?!

The commodity that Somalis, who had been killing each other, want most is mercy. Spare them the land, sea, and air fire spewed by the most up-to-date lethal weapons; they are the hungry of the post-cold-war era?!...

Afghanistan

Hekmatyar-Led Delegation Returns From Tour

LD2508194393 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Esteemed Engineer Golboddin Hekmatyar, prime minister of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, and his entourage returned to Kabul this morning after an official visit to Pakistan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia.

A BIA correspondent reported that the delegation, which included esteemed Foreign Minister Hedayat Amin Arsala, esteemed Finance Minister Karim Khalili, esteemed Hamidollah Tarza, minister adviser in economic affairs to the prime minister's office, and Afghanistan Bank Chairman Zabihollah Eltezam, was welcomed at Kabul International Airport by esteemed Deputy Foreign Minister Hamed Karzay; Saudi Arabia Deputy Ambassador [name indistinct]; al-Masu'di, charge d'affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran; [name indistinct], Pakistan's minister counsellor in Kabul; [name indistinct]; and a number of high-ranking officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

According to official sources, the Afghan prime minister arrived in country by land route.

According to another report, Afghan Foreign Minister Arsala this afternoon received correspondents from the BBC, AFP, AP, IRNA, (SADA), and (SIMA) agencies of the Islamic Republic of Iran for a news conference. During the news conference the foreign minister spoke about the visit to Pakistan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia by the esteemed prime minister and the high-ranking Afghan delegation. In reply to a question by reporters, he said: During this tour, our delegation asked these countries for help toward the reconstruction of our war-ravaged country. They expressed their readiness to help.

Hezbe-e Eslami Official Meets With Abdol Majid

LD2508205793 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Excerpt] Esteemed Engineer Qotboddin Helal, first deputy prime minister and head of the Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan] political committee, met this morning with esteemed General Abdol Majid, deputy head of Jonbesh Melli Eslami Afghanistan [National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan], and his companions in the prime minister's building.

According to a report by the prime minister's press office, during the meeting, which took place in a friendly and [word indistinct] atmosphere, both sides held talks on ensuring peace across the country and on selfless and fraternal cooperation among all strata and groups of the Afghan nation and on issues of interest. They expressed the hope that all-around cooperation will be rendered by the sides to ensure peace and security in Kabul and across the country.

According to another report, esteemed Eng. Qotboddin Helal, first deputy prime minister, met this morning with presidents of central banks [as heard] of the country in the premiership palace. The prime minister's press office reported to us that during the meeting comprehensive talks were conducted on the past and current situation of the banks. It was decided that the credibility of banks can be restored through a better organization of banking affairs.

As in the past, city branches of the banks will be reactivitated to facilitate banking affairs. Banking activities will be improved by acquiring urgent aid from the World Bank and the Asian Bank. Current accounts will be brought under control and unnecessary withdrawals of money from banks will be strongly supervised. Among other useful measures, currency expenses of delegations traveling abroad and unnecessary currency expenses by diplomatic missions of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan abroad shall be prevented.

The meeting was attended by esteemed Mohammad Yusuf Jawad, first vice president of De Afghanistan Bank, esteemed Mohammad Yaqub Neda, president of the Pashtani Tejarati Bank, esteemed Mohammad Zaher Wahdat, president of the Afghan Milli Bank, esteemed Najibollah Kohsar, president of De Saderato Bank, esteemed Hayatollah Azizi, president of de Sana'ati Bank, and esteemed Shah Jahan Ahmadyar, president of De Karani Bank. [passage omitted]

Austrian Energy Experts To Assist in Lighting Kabul

LD2208193193 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 22 Aug 93

[Text] Esteemed Mowlawi Arslan Rahmani, minister of Islamic Affairs and Endowment, met today with esteemed Seyyed Ebrahim Gilani, ambassador and representative-extraordinary of the Islamic State of Afghanistan in Austria.

The press department of the prime ministry reported that at the meeting, esteemed Gilani explained that during his meetings with governmental and nongovernmental authorities in Austria, it was decided that a technical delegation in power energy from Austrian municipality [as heard] would arrive in Kabul in the near future and make necessary assistance for lighting Kabul city. In addition, the UN atomic power energy [as heard] in Austria has promised to give as grant-in-aid one cobalt [as heard] machine for use in the elimination of cancer cells using laser technology, to the Islamic State of Afghanistan. The price of this medical equipment is equivalent to $200,000.

In addition, it was decided that the cleaning work of Naghlu, Sarowbi, and Mahi Par power stations, which have not been cleaned in a long time, would also be carried out by a separate Austrian delegation at the expense of that country. Moreover, a quantity of foodstuff and cloths that have been prepared for a UN child care organization will be delivered to the country in the near future.

Similarly, the governors of five regions of Austria has shown readiness to give to Afghanistan sufficient amounts of medicine and mine-clearing machines.

Esteemed Gilani added that Afghan patriot in Austria are interested in the maintenance of peace and security in the country and have shown readiness to take part in the reconstruction of their country.

India

Four Soldiers Among 10 Killed in Kashmir Clashes

BK2608145493 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] In occupied Kashmir, 10 people, including four Indian troops, have been killed in clashes at various places. Reports say two occupation troops were killed when their vehicle hit a landmine in Badgam area. Over 200 innocent people have been rounded up during severe crackdown by the Indian troops in Jammu region. Residents of Srinagar demonstrated against continuing Indian atrocities across the held valley. Several demonstrators were injured when Army resorted to firing to disperse them.

BJP To Train Veterans To Counter 'Militancy'

BK2508092993 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 17 Aug 93 p 3

[Text] Jammu - The Jammu and Kashmir unit of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has launched an amhitious programme to train one lakh ex-servicemen against growing Pakistani-sponsored militancy in the state. Senior retired Army officials who had joined BJP in the past have been asked to participate in the programmme to mobilise ex-servicemen.

Lt-Gen K.P.Candith (Retd), a hero of the 1971 Indo-Pak war addressed a convention of ex-servicemen here on Sunday. Talking to newsmen here on Monday, the former Army commander said that the armed infiltration from Pakistan has created a difficult situation n the state. "The infiltration has to be checked firmly," he said.

The former General-Officer-Commanding (GOC) of Western Command, which earlier included Jammu and Kashmir as well, said that Pakistanis have become highly trained in subversion after the Afghanistan war as they got training and material support from the US.

On being asked if the magnitude of infiltration from across has heen much less as compared to 1965 and 1971, he said that infiltrators have become more lethal now following indoctrination and armed support from ISI [Inter-services Intelligence], the Pakistani intelligence outfit.

Candith ruled out the suggestion by some BJP leaders that India should smash the training camps in Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) as it would lead to war between the two countries.

"In a unipolar world where our country has not many friends we cannot go in for such an action," he remarked. He defended the policy of BJP to have friendly relations with Israel to counter Pakistan and its allies.

Chaman Lal Gupta, president of the J and K [Jammu and Kashmir] unit of BJP said that two retired senior Army officers, namely Major-General B.C. Khanduri (retd) and Lt-Gen. Jacob. (retd) would address ex-servicemen rallies at Kathua and Sunderbani in Rajouri district this month.

He said that his party plan to have one lakh ex-servicemen out of total two and half lakh ex-servicemen living in the state.

Candith said that government should decided about the training of these ex-servicemen by Army.

'Failure' To Contain Kashmir 'Menace' Viewed

BK2508091993 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 19 Aug 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Confusion in Kashmir"]

[Text] The claim by the Minister of State for Interhal Security, Rajesh Pilot, that the Government was pursuing 'a transparent policy in Kashmir', will be received by many with scepticism. In fact the increasing menace of the secessionist militants in the valley and, occasionally in the Jammu region as well, suggests that the contrary is the case. The massacre of 17 innocent bus passengers in Doda on the eve of Independence Day was a grim reminder both of the savagery the militants were capable of perpetrating and the abject failure of the Jammu and Kashmir [J&K] administration to contain their threat. Further, reliable reports spoke of the influx of Islamic mercenaries, trained and paid for by Pakistan, in recent months to strengthen the ranks of the Kashmir militants. The diabolical attempts to hoist Pakistani flags on the latter's independence day and to pull down the tricolour a day later on Indian Independence Day underline the extent of alienation of the people in the valley from administration. Pakistan has been doing its utmost to fuel this process of alienation by fanning the fires of religious fanaticism and by pumping in arms and funds to the subversives.

Yet, that cannot absolve the Indian Government of messing around with Kashmir. The frequent changes in the administrative set-up in J&K have not made for consistency in approach towards the militants. But greater confusion has been caused by Pilot's initiatives and his senior colleague, Home Minister S. B. Chavan's attempts to foil them. At last Pilot has realised that there can be no elections in J&K in the foreseeable future. Also, it is time both he and Chavan stopped working at

cross-purposes. Confusion in New Delhi is the best ally of the militants in Kashmir. Since handling Kashmir is a man-sized job, responsibility must be clearly earmarked as to who is directly in charge of managing its affairs.

Ultimately, the Prime Minister cannot escape blame for the prevailing confusion. It is all very well for him to declare from the ramparts of the Red Fort that India would not allow secession of any part of the Union, but quite another to come up with a concrete policy package for bringing normal conditions back to Kashmir. Kashmir is a national issue and therefore all political parties represented in Parliament should be taken into confidence in the framing of a coherent Kashmir policy so that it enjoys the widest possible consensus. While giving no quarter to the disruptionists, all attempts must be made to win over the average Kashmiri who must be made to realise the futility of a war which India just cannot afford to lose. Kashmir is integral to the Indian Union. The import of that message must be the core of the 'transparent Kashmir policy' the outlines of which still remain invisible.

Exclusion of Pakistan From Terrorism List Decried

BK2508132993 Delhi All India Radio General Overseas Service in English 1010 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Kuldeep Singh Arora commentary: "Politics of Taking Pakistan off the Terrorist Hook"]

[Text] The national leadership in India that had great faith in the American uprightness on the global problems expected that America would do its utmost in containing terrorism anywhere in the world. It is in that light that India had been informing the U.S. Administration about the active role that Pakistan had been playing in abetting, encouraging, and inflaming terrorism in India. During the last 10 years or so, India provided (?irrefutable) evidence of Pakistan's training the Indian misguided youth in various camps in Pakistan as well as in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. India also displayed the sophisticated weapons seized from the extremists with Pakistan markings. The captured terrorists had also confessed their having been trained in Pakistan and provided with sophisticated weapons and assigned specific targets. Besides the information supplied by India, the U.S. Administration through its intelligence agencies, including CIA, had collected enough material to show that Pakistan was sponsoring terrorism across the border.

India had hoped that in the interest of fighting global terrorism, America would declare Pakistan a terrorist state and stop all aid, except on humanitarian grounds under the American law. But India's hopes have been belied to the utter dismay of all political watchers in India and abroad.

The issue has come once again on the surface with Clinton administration again reportedly asking Islamabad to completely and permanently halt its official support to terrorists in India, failing which the United States would name Pakistan a terrorist state when it reviews its earlier decision in December. Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs Wendy Shermann, in a communication to the committee, has said that they had informed former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of this decision and indicated that we will continue to monitor developments closely. The report of the congressional task force which had recommended Pakistan be branded a terrorist state is quite revealing. The State Department chose to ignore the congressional task force committee's report. Mr. (Stuart Bernard), the spokesman for the House Republican Research Committee's [name of committee as heard] task force on terrorism and unconventional warfare, has on record expressed his disappointment that the committee's report was not taken seriously by the administration. Mr. (Bernard) said the task force members simply could not comprehend how the administration could let Pakistan off the hook and not list it as a state that sponsored terrorism when all the intelligence pointed in that direction and was borne out by the evidence documented by the task force. The task force reports chronologically detail Pakistan's alleged involvement in fomenting the insurgencies in Kashmir and Punjab and the degree of support to the various militant groups. In a separate section titled Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Export of Terrorism, the report said that sponsoring international terrorism and separatist subversion and insurgency is not new to Pakistan. According to Mr. (Bernard), the report covered several countries and gave solid, comprehensive report used [as heard] on good intelligence information and had been provided to the State Department at the time the review of Pakistan's alleged activities was in full progress. It was the result of several years of research and analysis of the trends in the spread of Islamic fundamentalism. Despite all this material, on 14 July the secretary of state, Warren Christopher, announced taking Pakistan off the terrorist hook. In fact, since 1970's Islamabad has been training Sikh and other Indian separatist movements as part of Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's strategy of forward strategic (?base) and also as part of its efforts to take revenge for India's support for an independent Bangladesh.

Five Killed by Underground Rebels 25 Aug

BK2508080593 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] In Manipur, five persons, including two CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force] jawans [soldiers] were killed in Imphal this morning. AIR [All India Radio] Imphal correspondent quoting police sources reports that the incident occurred when some People Liberation Army extremists attacked a CRPF patrolling party. Six persons, including five civilians and one suspected extremist, were also injured in the ensuing encounter.

Five ULFA Extremists Arrested in Assam

BK2608033093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] In Assam, police has apprehended another hardcore ULFA [United Liberation Front of Assam] extremist. With this, the total number of ultras held

during the last two days has gone up to five. Three country boats were also recovered from their possession.

Technology Center of Atomic Energy Department Inaugurated

BK2608094293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] The Department of Atomic Energy, DAE, has opened a Technology Office Center at Anuskhati Bhavan in Bombay. The opening of the center coincided with the 74th birth anniversary of the eminent scientist and former chairman of Atomic Energy Commission, Dr. Vikram Sarabhai. The Technology Office Center will act as a coordinating agency between the various research establishments of the Atomic Energy Department.

Minister Admits First Cryogenic Engine Test Failure

BK2508113693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, told the Lok Sabha today that India was going ahead with the development of its own cryogenic engine program even after it had signed an agreement with Russia for transfer of such technology. Intervening to clarify the position on the development of cryogenic engines, he said the cancellation of the deal by Russia will now intensify the program to develop the cryogenic system. He said our scientists have already developed the prototype of 12-ton-capacity cryogenic engine and it is under testing. He said India approved the then USSR proposal for the transfer of technology, considering the main advantage of reducing the time frame for development of the cryogenic engine with a proven technology and lesser developmental risks without increasing the cost element. The engines from Russia would have put our satellite launch vehicle program ahead by a couple of years.

Answering the main question, the minister of state in the prime minister's office, Mr. Bhuvanesh Chaturvedi, told the house that at no stage did the ISRO [Indian Space Research Organization] put off its research and development work for developing the cryogenic engine indigenously. In a written reply to another question, Mr. Chaturvedi said that the test-fire failure of India's first indigenously designed 1-ton-thrust cryogenic engine last month has not in any way affected ISRO's cryogenic engine project.

Hopes fro GSLV Program 'Shattered'

BK2108093293 Delhi PATRIOT in English 13 Aug 93 p 4

[By Shailendra K. Dube]

[Text] The cryogenic engine deal which paved the path for the GSLV [Geostationary Launch Vehicle] programme has been frozen now. This deal which was signed in 1988 between India and Russia had generated a lot of hopes. These hopes lie almost shattered now.

In the Rs. [rupees] 305 crore two-part deal, the first envisaged supply of two cryogenic engines besides cryogenic engine technology. The second part, comprising Rs. 70 crore was to be utilised for setting up launching infrastructure facilities. Importantly, a large part of the deal was to be made in rupees. India bad already paid Rs. 80 crore to Glavkosmos for getting engine designs etc. and the deal was running as per schedule. Had everything gone smoothly, India could have placed INSAT-2 series in geosynchronous orbits by using cryogenic engine in its polar satellite launching vehicles (PSLV). These engines would not only enhance thrust load but also have payload carrying capacity.

Although ISRO [Indian Space Research Organization] scientists had earlier claimed successful testing of one ton cryogenic engine, the project was shelved upon seeing the prospects of getting cryogenic engine and related technology from Russia. Obviously, seeing tbe gravity of the situation now, our scientists have to restart the cryogenic engine project. They have to upgrade the indigenously developed cryogenic engine to the level of 12 ton capacity, then only can they carry the payload capacity of INSAT-2 series (about 2,000 kg). This will take another two years, and launching could be attempted in 1996-97. According to the chief of the National Aeronautics Laboratory (NAL), it has already requisite infrastructure facilities which can be successfully utilised hy ISRO, in the designing, fabrication and testing of the engines.

Since the collapse of super power USSR—a strong ally of India, after the end of cold war, the United States has presumably acquired a new role in global affairs. It is acting like world policeman. The way the United States is emerging as a sole super power and spreading its economic tentacles in the Third World developing countries is quite worrying. Earlier, India was brought under the ambit of Super 301, as well as the Special 301. Now, the MTCR [Missile Technology Control Regime] is being imposed on it. Irony is that India is not even a signatory to it. The MTCR which envisages an agreement between 22 industrially advanced nations is aimed at arresting missile and related technology proliferation in developing countries.

Time and again, India has declared its space project as a peaceful one for the welfare of the teeming millions in the country. The ISRO, since its inception, has always stressed on human welfare projects like IRS [Indian Remote Sensing Satellite], INSAT, etc. The arm-twisting of Russia by America and subsequently Russia towing the line of America can send the following signals to India:

Firstly, India has achieved considerable expertise in satellite designing, fabrication, and testing. Now what remains for it to do is to vie for launching. If India becomes successful, then it may also emerge as a potent competitor in the satellite launching market. Hitherto, this has remained the monopoly of the U.S. and European space agencies but with the entry of Russia, Japan,

and China there is neck and neck fight between them. This has also drastically cut the launching costs.

India was basically interested in tbe cryogenic deal because of the two reasons: (a) It would allow it to run the PSLV and GSLV programmes as per schedule and (b) getting cryogenic technology would save scarce foreign currencies in future launchings.

Secondly, the Clinton Administration considers India as the largest military power in South Asia whose influence has been felt far beyond the region. This was revealed by the Pentagon Report on the security assistance programme for fiscal year 1994.

This can also be attributed to the fact that India has successfully tested Prithvi [earth], Agni [fire] missiles which are part of Integrated Guided Missile Programme. In fact, India has joined the select ICBM [Intercontinental Ballistic Missile] club. The U.S. is, therefore, very apprehensive about the misuse of cryogenic engine technology for developing nuclear payload inter- continental missiles. Thougb India has flatly refused such allegations and time and again declared its peaceful intentions, the United States, guided by its strategic geopolitical considerations, remains unconvinced.

Thirdly, Russia's economic condition is presently like that of any other Third World developing country. It is making a difficult switch from socialist economy to market economy. While the former has ideological base, the latter is much guided by profit motive. Russia needs considerable degree of monetary help from Western countries. The G-7 nations have already assured Russia on this score. The United States, in particular, has been instrumental in the revamping of Russian economy.

So, can Russia turn a blind eye to such prospective partners, on the mere pretext of fulfilling cryogenic engine deal with India? It is alleged that the Rs. 305 crore deal would have provided jobs to 60,000 space workers of Glavkosmos where millions are jobless presently. Despite the deal cancellation, Glavkosmos has avowed to fulfill such a promise.

In a recent development, the Congress of Russian Deputies condemned President Yeltsin's decision of breaching the deal. But it must be remembered that in a recent referendum, more powers were given to the President rather than the hard-core Congress. Can the Congress, therefore, reinvoke the deal?

Whatever be the outcome, two things are clear. First, India should lay stress on its own indigenous development of cryogenic technology, rather than becoming a mute spectator and consequently jeopardising its space projects. Secondly, time and again, our policy-makers need to be reminded tbat in international relations, there are neither permanent friends, nor enemies but permanent interests. It is on this line of thought that our policy-makers should re-shape their strategy. They must, of course, keep in mind that our self-interest vis-a-vis America and Russia both should not be affected.

Minister on Progress in U.S. Trade Negotiations

BK2608090093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] The Government says although differences between India and the United States still persists in some areas of the intellectual property rights, the United States is generally sympathetic to Indian concerns on agriculture and issue of the farmers rights to retain seeds of protected varieties for use in subsequent crops. Replying to a question on the progress in their negotiations between the two countries on the Uruguay round of negotiations on the basis of the Dunkel proposals, the minister of state for commerce, Mr. Kamaluddin Ahmad, said the talks between the two are expected to be activated next month.

Japanese Bank To Provide Loan to ONGC

BK2508074693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] The Export-Import Bank of Japan has agreed to provide a loan of 22,000 million yen to the ONGC [Oil and Natural Gas Commission]. The loan agreement, signed on the 28th of the last month, will be used for expansion of shore terminal facilities at Hazira. Giving this information in the Rajya Sabha today, the petroleum and natural gas minister, Captain Satish Sharma, said the project is expected to be completed by February 1996.

Parties React to Deferral of Constitution Bills

Congress-I Sees No Defeat

BK2508153193 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] The Congress-I has said that the postponement of the consideration of the bills seeking to prevent misuse of religion in politics is neither a defeat of the government nor a victory for anyone. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, the party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, said that the bills have not been withdrawn. The government has only agreed to the request of the opposition parties, particularly the Janata Dal, for more time for wider consultations. Mr. Gadgil said the government will take its decisions on the bills after consulting the political parties. Asked whether a special session of parliament is likely to be convened to discuss the bills, Mr. Gadgil said it is for the government to decide.

The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] says that it will continue its campaign against the two bills seeking to separate religion from politics. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, the party president, Mr. L.K. Advani, said the government's decision to defer the bills was a result of Janata Dal's decision to oppose them. He said the BJP will oppose the bills whenever they are brought before parliament.

Other Parties State Views

BK2508041493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Aug 93

[Text] The Lok Sabha today deferred the debate on the bills seeking to prevent misuse of religion in politics. The House unanimously adopted two separate motions moved by the home minister, Mr. S.B. Chavan, and the minister of state for law, Mr. H.R. Bhardwaj. One of the bill is a constitution amendment, while the other is an amendment to the Representation of the People's Act.

Giving reasons for the government's decision, Mr. Chavan said the Janata Dal and some others have sought more time to examine the bills. There have also been a large number of representations. Reiterating the government's resolve to break the nexus between religion and politics, the home minister said discussions will continue with political parties and others to enlist their support. Mr. Chavan said the government knew it does not have the two-third majority to pass the constitution amendment and needed the support of other parties. It agreed to refer the bills to a joint select committee so that any apprehension on the provisions can be removed.

While the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] stand is well-known, the left parties have supported the bills from the very beginning. However, the Janata Dal, which had backed the bills initially, aired some doubts and told the government that they require more time.

The home minister said the bills were brought forward as the government was seriously concerned over the loss of hundreds of lives in communal riots after the Ayodhya incident. He said the naked exploitation of religion for political ends and communalism are ruining the country's polity.

While the BJP leaders, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee and Mr. L.K. Advani, charged the government with trying to rush through the bills, Mr. Somnath Chatterji, CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist], and Mr. Inderjit Gupta, CPI [Communist Party of India], blamed the BJP for not participating in the joint select committee's discussions. They also accused the BJP of distorting the provisions of the bills. The leader of left parties hoped that a broad-based national debate will help prepare the ground to fight communalism, both politically and ideologically. Expressing similar views, the Janata Dal leader, Mr. Sharad Yadav, said there is a need for a consensus involving all parties. He said any law can be effectively implemented only if it is accepted by the people. The BJP leader, Mr. Vajpayee expressed the view that there are many laws to deal with the problem of communalism. He disputed the government's contention that the amendments were prompted by the December 6 incident and alleged that the purpose was to disallow the BJP from contesting the elections. Mr. V.S. Rao, Telugu Desam; Mr. P.G. Narayanan, AIADMK [All India Dravida Munnetra Kazagham]; Mr. Surya Narayan Yadav, JD-A [Janata Dal-Ajit]; and Mr. Chitta Basu, Forward Bloc also spoke of the need for wider consultation to bring forward the proper legislation.

Our parliamentary correspondent reports that the government's decision to defer the bills came even as a packed house was awaiting the discussion to start. The speaker had earlier announced that the discussion will begin today and voting will take place tomorrow. The House also witnessed the procedural wrangle on the manner in which the government came up with its move. At one stage, the speaker, Mr. Shivraj Patil, took strong exception to a remark of a minister who later withdrew it.

The BJP leader, Mr. L.K. Advani, says the decision to defer the bills is a setback to what he called the Congress-Communist combined.

The Janata Dal-Ajit has expressed satisfaction over the deferring of the proposed bills.

The Indian Union Muslim League has welcomed the deferring of the debate on the two bills seeking to prevent misuse of religion in politics. The party leader, Mr. E. Ahmad, MP, said in New Delhi today that there is need for wider consultation on the bills.

Timing of Deferral Noted

BK2508052493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Commentary by Subhash Kirpekar]

[Text] The adoption of the bills seeking to delink religion from politics has been deferred. The Narasimha Rao government was keen to pass it in this session of Parliament itself, but it was compelled to defer it because it was unable to muster the required support in the Lok Sabha to begin with. It was only the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] that was opposed to the proposed legislation, though it would have undoubtedly been the worst sufferer had the bill been discussed and adopted. The National Front [NF] and the Left Front [LF] also opposed it for different reasons. Though their posturing is one of being secular parties, they were obviously concerned over the revulsion that the proposed law would have created in the majority community. It was time for them to differ sharply from the ruling party. That is why the Janata Dal chose to obstruct the passage of the bill even at the risk of NF-LF Combine being perceived to be siding with the BJP.

Political observers feel that it might have been a different story if the bill had come when there were no elections to be held immediately. But the heat is already on. Right now it is on the card that elections are to be held in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Himachal Pradesh—the four states that were ruled by the BJP until the Ayodhya events of 6 December. The opposition has criticized the bill at the introductory stage itself for being hastily drafted, vague, and potentially dangerous because of its many infirmities. It also questioned the effectiveness of the bills which sought to

introduce the phenomenon of pre-poll disqualification in the Indian political scene. In the normal time span of 20 days given for campaigning, the opposition wondered how any judicial authority could arrive at a conclusion to disqualify a candidate on a complaint that he or she had misused religion for political gains. Beside, if this power of decisionmaking was given to the judiciary, would it not mean poaching on the jurisdiction of the Election Commission, which enjoys the right to control the conduct of an election from the time of its notification to the time of the announcement of the results.

Many politicians, including those from the ruling party, point out that they started their election campaign after offering prayers in a place of worship as per tradition. Even this could be exploited by a political opponent to show that religion was being misused for political gains. The Congress-I has secured an advantage with the bills being deferred. The apparent failure to get the bill passed has its brighter side too. Had it been passed, the opposition would have been on the offensive and deprived the ruling party of all the aggressiveness. Now the ruling party needs no longer be on the defensive in the forthcoming election campaign as it can conveniently blame the opposition for striking a blow at secularism.

Rajya Sabha Passes Extradition Amendment Bill

BK2408163093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 24 Aug 93

[Text] The Rajya Sabha has passed the Extradition Amendment Bill 1993, incorporating changes in the Extradition Act 1962. The bill will enable India to conclude extradition treaty with any foreign state, including commonwealth countries. It provides extraterritorial jurisdiction over foreigners for their crimes abroad.

Replying to the debate on the bill, the minister of state for external affairs, Mr. R.L. Bhatia, said that the government will ask for extradition of LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] leader Prabhakaran once the judgment on the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi case is delivered. He said the government is holding talks with Germany and Hong Kong to sign extradition treaties with them. He expressed regret that Pakistan and Bangladesh, though SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] countries, have not yet ratified extradition treaties with us.

Extension Granted to Investigation of Security Scam

BK2608053393 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Commentary by N. Madhavan]

[Text] One more extension have been granted to the Joint Parliamentary Committee [JPC] probing the security scam, which completed a full year of its work earlier this month. There have been doubts in some quarters on why an extension should be granted to the 13-member committee after such a long spell of work. But there is little doubt that the nature of the committee's work have been a formidable one.

The committee has juggled with the nuances of the securities market, its flimsy instruments, a maze of guidelines, the gaps between theory and practice, the ways of the market, the rules of the Reserve Bank and the government, the involvement of the public sector, and various possible criminal angles. The possible involvement of political patronage has also been investigated, giving the committee its biggest challenge—that of arriving at a consensus.

Despite political divides and ideological differences within, the committee has largely functioned as a cohesive whole. The fact, that the five-member subcommittee of the JPC came out with a draft report without much rancor underscores this point. However, subsequent reports suggest that the committee as a whole has been having a seesaw round of discussions and amendments to arrive at a common point of view. There is every indication that the committee members want a unanimous report. Given their political role, however, the crucial points of divergence seem to be in assessing the exact nature and extent of governmental responsibility.

The situation is complicated by the fact that many of the errors in the scam have been sins of omission cutting across the board which has led to the view that there was actually a systems failure. In arriving at a consensus on where to pin responsibility and where to pinpoint systems failure, the JPC appears to be needing more and more time, which it has managed to get so far. The JPC will now meet on September 14th but informal consultations, it appears, will continue. With the committee set to make far reaching observations and recommendations its crucial objective will be to achieve credibility with consensus. The pursuit of these twin objectives is a tough one. No wonder the JPC wants more time.

Insat-2B Payload Planned To Expand Telecommunication

BK2308092793 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 23 Aug 93

[Text] The Lok Sabha has been informed that the communications payload of Insat-2B has been planned mainly to expand the telecommunications network to remote, hilly, and inaccessible areas of the country. The minister for communications, Mr. Sukh Ram, told the Lok Sabha that the different schemes that have been planned envisage the setting up of satellite earth stations in Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and the northeastern regions. He said digital technology will be used for providing long-distance trunk calls.

Review of Pharmaceutical Price Controls Planned

BK2408030693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 24 Aug 93

[Text] The government will have a fresh look at the whole gamut of the price control mechanism of drugs. This is to ensure that the prices of medicines do not rise sharply as a result of liberalized licensing. Giving the assurance in the Rajya Sabha, the minister of state for chemicals and fertilizers, Mr. Eduardo Faleiro, said that the government proposes to have a single list of essential drugs to be brought under price control. He said other changes in the drug policy includes incentives for manufacture of basic formulations. He assured members that the controls will be applicable to multinational companies as well.

Earlier, opposition members said that proposed drug policy may deprive the poor of getting quality medicines at cheap prices.

Annual Rice Production Increases To 74 Million Tons

BK2408075293 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 24 Aug 93

[Text] Rice production in the country has increased substantially following the introduction of a special scheme. The Lok Sabha was informed today that the production, which was over 54 million tons per annum during the sixth plan, went up to about 74 million tons in 1991-92. The agriculture minister, Dr. Bal Ram Jakhar, said under the scheme more than 41,000 farmers and farm laborers were trained last year in camps held in six states. He said the scheme with an outlay of 105 crore rupees was implemented in 23 states and the union territory of Pondicherry during 1992-93. Replying to supplementaries during the question-hour, Mr. Jakhar said the aim of the scheme is to provide modern technology to marginal and small farmers.

Lifting of Moratorium on Timber Felling Assailed

BK2308092493 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 15 Aug 93 p 1

[By Usha Rai]

[Text] New Delhi—The 10-year moratorium on felling of trees above 1,000 metre [figure as published] has been suddenly lifted by the UP [Uttar Pradesh] government and timber contractors have begun vandalising the hills of Uttarakhand.

According to reports reaching Delhi from "guardians of the mountains" like Sunderlal Bahuguna, Vandana Shiva and others, even before the local people became aware of the lifting of the ban, over 500 Kashmiri labourers arrived in Tons (the main tributary of the Yamuna) Valley, for the exploitation of the forests. The ban has been lifted without consulting the Centre or the local people.

UP is currently under Central rule and should have consulted the Environment and Forest Ministry on such an important issue which is bound to disturb the Himalayan ecology. But according to Environment and Forest Minister Kamal Nath, "I am not even aware of the lifting of the ban."

Nath, who feels strongly about the arbitrary manner in which the ban has been lifted, said he would be taking up the issue with the UP Governor.

The ban was imposed when Indira Gandhi as prime minister was handling the environment portfolio too. Following a fast by Bahuguna on the denudation of the UP hills, she appointed a committee headed by a former director of the Botanical Survey of India Kaul, to look into it.

Nalini Jayal of INTACH [Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage], who was the joint secretary in the Environment Ministry in 1983, when the overexploitation of the Himalayan forests hotted up, says the ministry favoured a 15-year moratorium on tree felling. The UP government pre-empted the Centre and imposed its own ban on cutting of trees above 1,000 metre.

The Central debate over the deforestation of the Himalayas however, continued. Since it would be difficult to determine which of the trees came from the restricted area above 1,000 metre and which came from below that level, the agriculture secretary (for forests was under agriculture) recommended that there should be no exploitation of forests upto the foothills of the Himalayas.

But the UP government never acted on this recommendation from the Centre and and the latter too did not pursue the issue

Meanwhile, Bahuguna has dashed off a letter of protest to B.K.Goswami, adviser to UP Governor Moti Lal Vora. Goswami replied that on the suggestions of the principal chief conservator of forests, tree felling above 1,000 metre had been resumed for better scientific management of forests. He clarified that only chir [pine] trees are being cut. The ban on other tree species, however, continues.

Goswami has given Bahuguna three reasons for lifting the ban on tree felling:

In areas where there has been total regeneration of forest cover, he said old trees were suppressing young ones and it was therefore considered expedient to remove them.

Where there is a low density of tree cover and most of the trees are old, for natural regeneration it was considered vital to remove the old trees and allow only the seed bearing species to continue.

Even where there is dense regeneration leading to competition among trees for space, thinning of the forests was recommended.

Bahuguna and Jayal, however, maintain these are specious, arguments for renewing the commercial exploitation of the forests. A Pandora's box has been opened and legal as well as illegal tree felling is on.

Jayal maintains that trees in the UP hills could not be more than 60 to 70 years old. Because of the extensive tapping for resin, the roots of the trees get weak and the trees topple over in a storm. So, in fact, the trees that are being cut are not that old.

Purely from the ecological angle too, the hydrology of the mountains demands retention of old treees. With the cutting of trees, greater soil runoff and danger of increased landslides in the UP hills has been predicted.

If the Himalyan forests are to be exploited, it is the local people who should have first choice on the trees, says Jayal. After the earthquake of 1991, in which several homes were destroyed, there has been a shortage of timber for house construction.

In Kumaon and Garhwal, most of the broad leaved trees like the oak, which are excellent soil binders and whose leaves form the fertile top soil, have already been destroyed. Mixed forests are being replaced by monoculture pine plantations and now the government has sanctioned destruction of these too.

Obviously, the decision to reopen the Himalyan forests of the UP hill is for commercial gains has been taken at the highest level. The Governor comes from Durg in Madhya Pradesh [MP] where the timber lobby is quite active. Now what they are doing to the forests of MP is happening in UP.

Iran

Opposition Spokesman Says Regime Increasing Repression

NC2608110493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1005 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Baghdad, 26 Aug (MENA)—Farid Salman, a spokesman for Iran's Mojahedin-e Khalq opposition organization, has announced that the Iranian regime has recently increased its acts of repression, arresting opposition figures and persecuting women and religious and ethnic minorities.

Salman told Baghdad's MENA correspondent that the Iranian regime has killed or wounded 263 Iranian opposition members living abroad in 90 attacks carried out by its agents.

The Iranian opposition spokesman urged international human rights organizations to defend the rights of Iranian exiles by exerting pressure on the Iranian regime to make it stop assassinating opposition figures.

Commenting on the Iranian regime's decision to facilitate the return of Iranian exiles to their country, he said this decision is designed to deceive world public opinion. He said that the millions of exiles who left their country because of the regime's human rights abuses do not need such a decision because they will not return until the Tehran regime is overthrown.

President Inspects, Addresses IRGC Ground Forces

LD2608104193 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Addressing a gathering of the commanders of the Ground Forces unit of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps [IRGC], the president of the republic today eulogized the valuable role played by the country's military and security forces in safeguarding the achievements of the Islamic revolution and in strengthening and stabilizing the Islamic system.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsajani expressed the belief that the maintenance and amelioration of the preparedness and efficiency of those forces, especially at the command level, and the modernization of military hardware, would guarantee the future of the revolution and the system.

At this meeting, Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the chairman of the High Council of National Security, said that safeguarding the revolution and its goals, specifically after the enemies learned of the revolution's nature, ranked as a miracle by far greater and more magnificent than the victory of the revolution.

Delving into the reasons for the success of the Muslim Iranian nation in aborting the very dangerous plots by the domestic and foreign enemies, Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that the secrets of the successes scored during the sacred defense and the imposed war [with Iraq] lay, among others things, in the wise leadership of the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Eminence Imam Khomeyni, peace be on him, whom the vast mass of people followed, as well as in the courage and self-sacrifice of the country's armed forces, especially the IRGC.

He also stressed the need for the military and security forces to maintain their alertness and to embark on planning for the future with a view to training specialized and expert forces, specifically at command level. He said: The kind of armed forces which, while being powerful and strong, are supporters of the underdog and opposed to all sorts of aggression, violence, and imposition by force, will give cause for happiness to a country's people and officials.

He expressed the hope that the country's military and security forces will maintain sincerity and Islamic cohesion among themselves, especially in relations between commanders and subordinates, and in so doing make even greater efforts in safeguarding the achievements of the Islamic revolution and in training committed and efficient forces.

Earlier MajorGeneral Mohsen Reza'i, IRGC commander in chief, offered congratulations on the beginning of Government Week. He also submitted a report on the past activities and future plans of the IRGC, saying that the main focus of these plans was to maintain the preparedness of the IRGC in safeguarding the country and the values of the Islamic revolution.

Petroleum Minister Reflects on Industry Successes

LD2508190293 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Passages in quotation marks are recorded]

[Text] As mentioned before, Petroleum Minister Aqazadeh-Kho'i has spoken in an interview with our correspondent about the performance of the oil industry during the first five-year plan. I draw your attention to the interview.

[Unidentified correspondent] Ever since oil was found and produced in Iran in the first decade of the 20th century, no other commodity has had such an effect on the policies and economics of the state. Although the Islamic revolution made liberation from a single-commodity economy and varying exports as its main economic objectives, until now oil has maintained its essential status and role in the state economy. [passage omitted]

Petroleum Minister Aqazadeh says that during the four years and four months which have passed since the beginning of the first five-year plan, the Petroleum Ministry has earned around $61 billion in foreign currency for the state economy, and that the supply of oil products to the people has almost tripled since the time before the revolution. The petroleum minister adds:

[Aqazadeh] "From the point of view of foreign currency income, in the past four years and four months we have fortunately had a desirable situation with regard to the plan and budget. This has been within the budget and more than planned.

"From the point of view of fuel supply, we have distributed more diesel fuel, gasoline, and fuel oil than envisaged. As for paraffin fuel, supplies have been less than planned because of the problems we have had in the past years.

"From the point of view of gas replacement [for other fuels], although the plan envisaged a 7.6-percent increase, we were fortunate to raise the rate of increase of gas consumption to 22 percent. This means we have succeeded in increasing the rate of replacing fuels with gas by up to three times the envisaged rate."

[Correspondent] [passage omitted] On the status of the country's oil resources, Mr. Aqazadeh adds:

[Aqazadeh] "Although our remaining exploitable resources amount to about 92 billion barrels, we still have potentially very good oil resources in the Persian Gulf as well as in the Caspian Sea and on land. There is very good news concerning oil resources found. There is a new oil field in the Darkhoveyn area. The first well drilled in the area fortunately struck very light oil which is similar to North Sea oil. Experts have assessed the existing oil to be about 7 billion barrels. The amount of exploitable oil will be determined after other exploratory oil wells have been drilled in the area."

[Correspondent] While petrochemical production was relatively low at the beginning of the first economic plan, in the past few years the extent of petrochemical production in the country has enjoyed a substantial increase. On this subject Mr. Aqazadeh says:

[Aqazadeh] "In 1367 [year beginning 21 March 1988] we produced 880,000 tonnes of chemical and petrochemical products. Fortunately, last year that figure reached 5.5 million tonnes. It is hoped that the figure will reach 6 million tonnes this year. Of course, with the units under implementation, the capacity of the state will increase up to 12 million tonnes of intermediate or final products. With that capacity not only will we be able to meet domestic requirements; we will also be preparing to export some $500 million in exports annually. It is hoped to reach that capacity, God willing, in the next one or two years."

Announces New Oil Field Discovery

LD2508171193 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Excerpt] Engineers in the state oil industry have discovered a new oil field in the Darkhovin area in Khuzestan Province. The estimated capacity of the oil field is believed to be seven billion barrels.

According to Petroleum Minister Aqazadeh-Kho'i, the oil in this field is of the light variety, similar to North Sea oil. The ministry has begun operations to assess more accurately the amount of oil that can be produced from the field. [passage omitted]

Khamene'i Urges Cabinet Adherence to Religion, Ideology

LD2608062193 Tehran IRNA in English 1740 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 25, (IRNA)—The leader of the Islamic Republic, Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, Wednesday [25 August] exhorted President Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and his cabinet to abide by the religious values and the ideological principles of the revolution in the performance of the duties of their office.

He said a principal duty of the administration is to ensure a broader and a more conscious concern of the individual for divinely-based values towards the building of a sin-free society committed to the welfare of its people.

Ayatollah Khamene'i, receiving President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and his new cabinet in their first audience

with him, recommended that each cabinet minister make sure to rely on devout and professionally competent individuals as his assistants for the performance of the tasks ahead so that they would be successful in attending to the needs of the people.

The leader of the Islamic Republic commented also that the framework for the nation's policymaking had been cast and would be presented to the cabinet for their consideration later on. He expressed hope that the administration would give it a successful go-ahead.

Introducing his new cabinet to Ayatollah Khamene'i at the start of the audience here Wednesday, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said his administration was proud to have successfully passed the difficult phase of the revolution during the past four years braving deprivations and other hardships and accomplishing services for the people.

President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said despite calculations by the western observers the Islamic Republic did not succumb to the pressures brought upon it during the past few years and did not relinquish the ideological principles of Islam and the revolution in its struggle under those pressures. He expressed confidence that the second five-year development plan would solidify the previous policies of his administration.

Iranian 'Agents' Said To Attack Baghdad Home for Elderly

JN2108122493 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1045 GMT 21 Aug 93

[Text] Baghdad, 21 Aug (INA)—The office of the Iranian Mojahedin-e Khlaq Organization in Baghdad has issued a statement in which it declared that the Iranian regime's terrorist agents attacked a private residential building housing a number of aged mothers of Mojahedin-e Khalq martyrs near al-Firdows Square in Baghdad. The attack took place at 0030 on Friday [20 August].

The statement explains that this crime resulted in no human losses. None of the mothers was hurt. Only one of the rooms in the building and some furniture was damaged. The statement said that the terrorist agents fled under the cover of night.

The office of the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization held the terrorist agents of the Iranian regime directly responsible for this terrorist act. The organization expressed its just right to self-defense against such acts. It said that the ruling terrorist dictatorship in Iran, which acts under the cloak of religion, is receiving the appropriate response to such acts inside Iran.

The Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization urged the UN secretary general and the UN Security Council to raise the issue of imposing an weapons and oil embargo on the inhuman Khomeyni regime as a result of its violation of human rights and exportation of terrorism.

The statement affirms that the government of mullahs in Iran is engaged in constantly increasing acts of terrorism and crimes outside Iran.

President Criticizes Western Pressures on Libya

LD2608103093 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] This morning President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, received Mr. Mahdi Ambirash, the Libyan ambassador in Iran, who was carrying a written message for Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani from the Libyan leader.

After submitting the message of Colonel al-Qadhdhafi, the Libyan ambassador, on behalf the people and the leader of Libya, congratulated Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani for his re-election to the post of the Presidency and also for the vote of confidence given by the Majles to the members of the cabinet and the successful programs of the government.

In a report on the latest developments in Libya, he considered threats and the imposition of sanctions on Libya by some Western countries as an unjust attitude, which is derived from the bullying and domineering nature of those countries on the world stage.

Then Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed his thanks for the friendly message from the Libyan leader. He then criticized some Western countries for creating problems for Libya. He said: Imposing sanctions, creating fear, and threatening violence and coercion under the pretext of some unfounded accusations are against international principles and rights, as well as constituting a violation of the sovereign rights of an independent nation.

He then expressed hope for the implementation of UN resolutions, and for international forums and organizations dealing with existing issues between Libya and some Western countries. He further stressed the Islamic Republic of Iran's readiness to help the process of resolving this problem through peaceful means.

Special UN Tajik Envoy Briefs Deputy Minister on Talks

LD2508190993 Tehran IRNA in English 1653 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Tehran, Aug. 25, (IRNA)—Special envoy of the United Nations Secretary General for the Tajik crisis, Ismat Kittani, said here today that the only solution for ending the crisis in the Central Asian Republic was an immediate establishment of ceasefire and holding of peace talks between the two warring parties.

In a meeting with Iran's deputy foreign minister for Euro-American affairs, Mahmud Va'ezi, he appreciated Iran's efforts to mediate an end to the crisis. He briefed Va'ezi on his mission and the recent developments in Tajikistan.

Va'ezi said Iran believed from the beginning that the Tajik crisis has no military solution and continuation of the tension would worsen the situation and create an Afghanistan-like situation in the region. He said the Islamic Republic of Iran in its peace efforts has encouraged the officials of neighbouring states to find a just political solution, paving the way for repatriation of refugees and for negotiations between the Tajik Government and the opposition.

Va'ezi expressed Iran's readiness to cooperate with all states in the region and the United Nations in this regard.

Kittani arrived in Tehran on Wednesday for his second visit to Iran since June. He visited Kabul and Dushanbe before his arrival here.

Commentary Assails UN 'Double Standards' on Bosnia

LD2508155493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0952 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Station commentary]

[Excerpts] After several weeks of debate at the Security Council on Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Council finally issued resolution 859 in this regard. [passage omitted] Muhammad Shakir Beg, the Bosnian permanent representative to the United Nations, considers that the chief reason for the deplorable state of affairs in Bosnia is the behavior of the international community and of the Security Council.

The fact is that if the international community had seriously confronted the aggressors against Bosnia's territorial integrity and independence, then the human tragedy in Bosnia would not have reached such a scale. On the question of Bosnia, the Security Council inflicted blows on that country from two directions. The first was that the Security Council's confrontation with Serbian and Croatian aggression against independent Bosnia's territory was discriminatory. By turning a blind eye on the crimes of the Serbs and Croats and the despicable ethnic cleansing policy, it paved the way for the continuation of such aggression. Second, by altering their proposed plans to solve the Bosnian crisis, the Security Council and those in charge of the EC and the United Nations endorsed the military gains of the aggressors, step by step, and thus encouraged the policy of continuing the aggression.

The feebleness of the United Nations when it came to implementing its previous resolutions on stationing its military observers in the safe regions of Bosnia-Herzegovina—despite announcements by Islamic countries that they were prepared to despatch 18,000 troops—shows that the big powers have colluded against the Muslim people of Bosnia; and, by violating their previous resolutions, they have carried out a plot which had already been worked out.

According to political observers, by issuing this latest resolution, the Security Council has actively declared its support for the Vance-Owen proposal for solving the Bosnian crisis and the one-week ultimatum attached to it. The Serbs and Croats have accepted the proposal, which gives them many concessions. It is interesting that Serb or Croat representatives have not sought to refer the question back to their own parliaments, which is what they previously said they needed to do. Although the Muslims have not accepted this proposal, they may finally have to, in view of joint Serb and Croat military pressure and political pressure by the EC and the Security Council brought to bear against them. If this happens, then one may well ask what is the future of international organizations with such double standards?

Tehran Radio Views U.S. 'Retreat' on PRC Vessel

NC2508193693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Commentary by News Commentaries Group]

[Text] Finally, after it languished for two weeks in the waters near the Persian Gulf, it was announced that the PRC vessel Yinhe would dock at al-Dammam port in Saudi Arabia. For the past two weeks, this vessel was surrounded by U.S. warships that impeded its passage toward its destination.

The United States claims that Yinhe contains materials that can be used to manufacture chemical weapons. The PRC rejected the U.S. allegations and said the cargo included stationery, machine tools, and commercial items. The U.S. interception of the ship has generated political tension between the PRC and the United States for two weeks.

Now the Yinhe is headed toward the Saudi Arabian port of al-Dammam following the PRC's proposal to have the cargo of the ship checked by a third country. The United States had insisted that the vessel be checked by the U.S. Navy but PRC resistance led to the United States agreeing to the proposal.

Even though the inspection of the PRC vessel by a third country can be considered a compromise catering to the demands of both sides, most circles interpret it as a retreat on the part of the United States. The possible repercussions of this action have inspired immense apprehension as political observers feel such actions undermine the principles of free trade among countries.

Most important of all, the negative fallout of the U.S. action affects the talks on chemical disarmament. While efforts are under way to formulate new conventions regarding chemical disarmament, the main source of contention is the exchange of materials that can be considered dual-purpose materials. The greater powers headed by the United States are striving to impose

restrictions on exchanging such materials. The developing countries on the other hand believe such limitations adversely affect their chemical industries.

The U.S. action of intercepting the PRC vessel—which coincided precisely with the annual convocation of the chemical disarmament conference—was aimed at driving home how the greater powers back their opinions with force, thus heightening the concern of the developing countries. This issue highlights the obstacles in the path of the talks on chemical disarmament.

Edict on Author Rushdie Said 'Non-Negotiable'

LD2508185493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Talks between the officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Britain are under way to normalize the relations between the two countries.

These ties had confronted several problems during the recent years, creating various fluctuations in the trend of Tehran-London ties. At present the two countries' cooperation in the economic field has reached an acceptable level. However, from the political point of view the level of these ties does not fulfill the present needs of the two countries. Due to the said reason, the two countries have launched efforts to provide ground for greater economic, scientific, and technical cooperation by improving their political ties.

London considers the issue of Salman Rushdie as the main obstacle in the way of normalization of the two countries' relations, whereas the Islamic Republic of Iran considers the Salman Rushdie issue as being related to the beliefs of the world Muslims.

On the basis of the late Imam Khomeyni's religious edict, all Muslims have the responsibility which should be placed within the framework of inter-government official ties [as heard]. On the basis of this, despite the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran, in view of its independent viewpoints regarding the international issues, has difference of opinion with the British Government, this matter has never become an obstacle in its economic, scientific, and technical ties with Britain.

Today on the international scene, despite having basic differences of views regarding various issues, several countries have laid town healthy ties on the basis of friendship and common interests. Something which has yielded positive results on the international scene.

By relying on the same theme, political analysts believe that the problems which are present today on the way of normalizing the Tehran-London ties, leaving aside the Salman Rushdie issue, which is completely a matter of belief and non-negotiable, are not the ones that cannot be solved.

Speaking in an interview with Radio Tehran last Monday, Foreign Minister Velayati, announced: Iran is willing to improve its ties with Britain on the basis of respecting the rights of the two sides. At present the two countries' diplomatic ties are restricted to the charge d'affaires level, but from the economic point of view, Britain is considered as the fourth major trade partner of Iran, and an acceptable level of cooperation in scientific, technical, and exchange of students fields exists between the two countries.

According to political analysts, efforts are under way to stop at all costs the Tehran-London ties from improving. Dual propaganda tactics, that is the violation of human rights and democracy, and support for terrorism, are being used by the western media, especially the American propaganda, against the Islamic Republic of Iran. But as this propaganda has so far yielded no desirable result for them, they have resorted to diplomatic tactics in order to achieve their evil goals.

Despite all this, the positive and successful foreign policy performance of the Islamic Republic of Iran during the recent years has taken away any and all chances from the conspirators, rendering them ineffective.

At present, we are witnessing the expansion of other countries' ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran, and with the passage of time, even the most pessimistic governments have revised their former wrong viewpoints. They know that in order to have close ties with Tehran, they should discard their domination-seeking thinking, and press the hand of friendship with Iran on the basis of mutual interests.

IRNA on Problems in UK Ties

LD2508153593 Tehran IRNA in English 0942 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] London, Aug. 25, IRNA—The Foreign Office has admitted that Britain would prefer better relations with Iran but said there were no special negotiations to upgrade ties. A Foreign Office spokesman told IRNA that there were regular diplomatic contacts between the two countries but was not aware of any initiative to improve relations, currently soured to the level of charge d'affaires.

Speaking on Tehran Radio Monday [23 August], Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Veleyati said his government was ready to expand relations with London on the basis of respect for each other's rights and spoke about talks in progress for better ties.

The spokesman added that Britain had always said diplomatic relations, dogged since the Islamic revolution, were not at desireable level due to the obstacles still remaining on the way.

Since earlier this year relations were set back by the UK Government, over the Rushdie affair, as a political dispute with Iran, there are indications of a greater London willingness to overcome the feud and address

rationally the consequences of its shock that still lingers after being ejected from Iran in 1979. [sentence as received]

The clearest sign has come from the Foreign Office by approving the dispatch of an inter-parliamentary union delegation to Tehran for the first time since the Islamic revolution.

Another factor which may have led to a more conciliatory stand could have been an unpublicized meeting between British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd and Conservative MP Emma Nicholson after recent visit to Iran in which she praised Tehran's humanitarian effort for Iraqi refugees.

With the appointment of Jeffrey James as the new British charge d'affaires to Tehran this month, he is expected to be able to build up the report David Reddaway submitted at the end of his three-year tenure.

Before his departure from Tehran, the outgoing charge d'affaires reportedly asked Iran's foreign minister to ensure he will meet Hurd during next month's UN General Assembly in New York.

The Foreign Office spokesman did not elaborate whether James took with him any sign of goodwill, including letters, when he took up his post a week ago. But there were suggestions that one of the immediate tasks would be to streamline the contentious issue of visa applications.

One of the side effects of poor relations between the two countries has been the fallout on British trade with Iran, which has plummetted this year. In an effort to redress such a drop, up to 60 UK companies are seeking to attend next month's international trade fair in Tehran.

No one can underestimate the complexities of improving bilatteral ties, especially when Britain often associates itself with the U.S. campaign to intensify political and economic pressures on Iran.

Conservative Chairman of the British-Iranian Parliamentary Group Peter Temple-Morris sees much depending upon addressing Iran's false image represented in the West but suggests that with judicious planning, such a stereotypical barrier could be quickly removed.

The crucial factor is having the political will and with the parliamentary delegation visit delayed until next April, relations are unlikely to become more cordial in a near future unless a separate initiative is sought by London.

Maldives

President Dismisses Fisheries Minister Ibrahim

BK2508130793 Hong Kong AFP in English 1230 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Colombo, Aug 25 (AFP)—Maldives President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom Wednesday [25 August] sacked his brother-in-law, Fisheries Minister Abbis Ibrahim, and vowed to press ahead with democratic reforms, official sources said.

The sacking of the fisheries minister came amid reports that he had colluded with his own brother Ilyas, who mounted a failed bid Monday to constitutionally overthrow Gayoom who first came to power in 1978.

Ilyas was sacked earlier from the influential portfolio of minister in charge of atolls administration two months ago and has since left the country. He is now believed to be somewhere in Southeast Asia.

The government is trying Ilyas in absentia on charges of attempting to influence Majlis (parliament) members to help him become president.

Gayoom, 55, narrowly won Monday's vote in the Majlis to become the sole nominee for another five-years in office begining November 11. His nomination means he is almost certain to be confirmed president at a national referendum.

The president faced an unprecedented challenge from Ilyas who polled a surprising 18 votes as against Gayoom's 28 in the 48-member assembly.

"All the members (of the Majlis) expressed solidarity with Gayoom (on Wednesday) Even those who voted Ilyas spoke highly of the president," a diplomatic source in the Maldives capital Male said by telephone.

The source said that Gayoom vowed to speed up the reforms he had promised in the tiny Indian Ocean atoll nation of some 1,192 coral islands across the eqator.

In an address to the nation last week, Gayoom called for unity and harmony in his peaceful republic and warned that instability could lead to foreign interference, diplomatic sources in the capital island Male said by telephone.

He had also promised to give greater powers to Majlis members to question the work of various ministries in line with what is practised in other parliamentary democracies.

While many Maldivians accuse the Ibrahim brothers of corruption, they have also blamed Gayoom for not taking decisive action against his in-laws who controlled key postions in government as well as in business.

Ilyas Ibrahim stemmed a rising wave of public opinion against him by fleeing the country in 1990 but returned after a brief stay abroad after being reinstated by Gayoom.

No replacement has been named for Abbas Ibrahim. Fisheries is one of the main sources of revenue for the Maldives, home to some 205,000 Sunni Moslems.

'Crucial' Meeting To Decide Presidential Candidate

BK2208155493 Hong Kong AFP in English 1543 GMT 22 Aug 93

[Text] Colombo, Aug 22 (AFP)—The tiny Indian Ocean atoll nation of the Maldives is to hold a crucial meeting Monday [23 August] to decide on a presidential candidate for a five year term begining November, diplomatic sources said Sunday.

President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom is almost certain to be chosen the sole candidate to go before the less than 100,000 strong electorate at a referendum to confirm the election by the 48-member parliament, sources said.

Diplomatic sources contacted by telephone said Gayoom, 55, had expressed his willingness to continue in office for a fourth term in office and was regarded the only contender for the job. Gayoom first came to power in 1978.

There had been political tension in the nation of some 1,192 small coral islands following a challenge to Gayoom by his brother in law Ilyas Ibrahim who was known to have had presidential ambitions.

Gayoom sacked Ibrahim last week amid charges that he illegally attempted to influence members of parliament to nominate him as the next presidential candidate. Ibrahim had left the country several weeks prior to his dismissal.

Nepal

Five Killed as Police Fire on Flood Victims

BK2508144493 Hong Kong AFP in English 1351 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Kathmandu, Aug 25 (AFP)—Police fired on starving flood victims in a village in Nepal's Sarlahi district southeast of Kathmandu earlier this week, killing five people and injuring 12, a communist party source said Wednesday [25 August].

A Home Ministry spokesman confirmed only two deaths and eight injuries and said five policemen and a police inspector were among the injured in the melee.

The main political opposition in the parliament, the Nepal Communist Party-United Marxist and Leninist (NCP-UML) Wednesday demanded the government set up an investigation commission to probe the circumstances leading to the incident and to punish the guilty, a parliamentary source told AFP.

The NCP-UML source, who requested anonymity, said the row erupted in Barhathawa village after students put up posters and handed out leaflets protesting the misappropriation and sale of relief materials on the black market.

"But instead of punishing the culprits, the police arrested students who were mercilessly beaten during their detention at the local police station," the source said.

The source said more than 2,000 villagers marched to the police station in protest and demanded the immediate release of of the students, leading a police officer to order the dispersal of the crowd with batons. Police also fired blanks at the crowd.

The NCP-UML source said the villagers panicked and started stoning the police station and burned a government truck used for transporting relief materials.

The Home Ministry spokesman said: "To control the mob, the police had no alternative but to open fire in self-defence which caused the death of two and injuries to eight others, including a police inspector."

The spokesman added that after the shooting the "law and order situation at Barhathawa returned to normal."

The NCP-UML source said the dead included a secondary school student and a 40-year-old man, but said the other victims identities could not be determined as their bodies were quickly removed by police.

The NCP-UML said the shootings had occurred without prior warning.

Reports reaching Kathmandu from Sarlahi district said the NCP-UML and the extreme leftist party—the United Peoples Front—had met Tuesday to protest police atrocities there.

More than 2,000 people were killed and thousands left homeless last month after Nepal's worst floods and landslides in almost a century.

Pakistan

Foreign Office Comments on F-16's, PRC Missiles

BK2508161893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] Talks between Pakistan and the United States on regional issues, bilateral relations, and security will begin in Washington on Monday [30 August]. The Pakistani delegation to the talks will be led by Foreign Secretary Shaharyar Khan.

A Radio Pakistan representative reports that this will be the first-ever bilateral discussions in detail with the Clinton administration after the visit to Pakistan by the acting U.S. assistant secretary of state, John Malott. Talks between India and the United States on regional security have been held twice and another round will be held soon. In a briefing to newsmen in Islamabad today, the Foreign Office spokesman said talks will be held on bilateral relations during the first three days after which regional security and questions on nonproliferation will be discussed.

[Begin Foreign Office spokesman recording—in English] It is our hope that these talks on bilateral as well as regional and security measures will start to further improve relations between the two countries. [end recording]

In reply to a question, the spokesman said Pakistan is having separate talks on F-16s in a certain course of action. These talks are being held through mutual consultations in a way that is acceptable to both sides.

On the reported statement of the U.S. State Department on the Chinese M-11 missiles, the spokesman said Pakistan and PRC have assured the United States that we are not violating the Missile Technology Control Regime [MTCR] criteria. He said the PRC, of course, had provided a few short-range missiles before February last year. But it does not violate the guiding principles of the relevant criteria. The spokesman said the real threat is from India on the proliferation of missiles.

[Begin Foreign office spokesman recording—in English] Concern for missile proliferation in our region does not arise from Pakistan, but from India's extensive missile development program, including the Prithvi [Earth] and the Agni [Fire] systems to both of which Pakistan is vulnerable and both of which are beyond the MTCR criteria. [end recording]

The spokesman said the United States has suggested that there must be talks between Pakistan and India on this issue. Pakistan has had expressed willingness to respond positively to this suggestion to prevent a missile race in the region.

U.S. Sanctions Decision Regretted

BK2608104093 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1000 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Abdus Sattar has disclosed that India is stockpiling and reprocessing plutonium for manufacturing nuclear weapons. Speaking on an adjournment motion sought to be moved by Professor Khurshid Ahmed on the acquisition of nuclear weapon technology by India in the Senate today, Abdus Sattar said that India had started the processing of plutonium in the 1960's and according to the latest reports, it currently possesses hundreds of kg's of plutonium which can easily be used for making nuclear weapons. Aside from this, India also acquired heavy water illegally from certain Scandinavian countries in order to execute its weapon development program. This poses a serious threat to the cause of international peace and the objectives of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, he added.

Referring to the sanctions imposed by the United States in view of the alleged supply of missiles by China to Pakistan, the foreign minister said that even though Pakistan is not a signatory to the Missile Technology Control Regime, they have informed the United States that the supply of the short-range missiles to Pakistan does not come under the purview of this regime. He regretted that in spite of the above facts, the United States has decided to impose sanctions on the basis of incorrect information.

Foreign Minister Reacts to Rao Remarks on Kashmir

BK2608083693 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 26 Aug 93

[Text] Pakistan has urged India to abandon violence and brutal use of force in occupied Kashmir and resolve the Kashmir question in accordance with the accepted principles. The call was made by the foreign minister, Mr. Abdus Sattar, in a statement in the Senate this morning. Reacting strongly to the remarks made by the Indian prime minister on his country's independence day, the foreign minister called upon India to return to the path of peace, respect law, and adopt civilized conduct in this connection.

Referring to Mr. Narasimha Rao's remarks that Kashmir is ours, Mr. Abdus Sattar reminded India no civilized community can accept such a blatant assertion because India had occupied Kashmir through aggression. He pointed out that international law rejects acquisition of a territory by force. He said Pakistan will provide full moral and political support to the inalienable right of people of Kashmir to self-determination and oppose Indian attempts to impose its will on the people of Kashmir.

Mr. Abdus Sattar regretted that India was indulging in state terrorism in occupied Kashmir. He said peaceful and cooperative relations between Pakistan and India will be beneficial to the people of both countries, but this can be achieved only on the basis of law and justice and respect for pledges made by India to the people of Kashmir.

Continuing Violence Reported in Occupied Kashmir

12 People Killed, 50 Arrested

BK2508145693 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1400 GMT 25 Aug 93

[Text] In occupied Kashmir, 12 more people were martyred and around 50 arrested during a house-to-house search and siege operations conducted by Indian forces. The KASHMIR MEDIA SERVICE reports that a superintendent of police in Baramula narrowly escaped death in an attack by the freedom fighters, but his wireless operator was seriously wounded. Two unidentified bodies have been recovered from a nearby river in the (Zarinal) area of Islamabad District. There was a complete strike in the Nishat area of Srinagar today against the martyrdom of a freedom fighter.

Meanwhile, a curfew remained in force for the last 10 days in the Uri area. Atrocities are being committed against the people, in which 10 innocent persons have been martyred and a number of others injured.

According to the KASHMIR MEDIA SERVICE, the Indian Border Security Force has officially admitted that

30 soldiers have been killed and more than 35 injured as a result of land mine explosions during the last few days. The Indian security force also confessed that Indian troops are facing difficulties in movement due to the increased activities of the freedom fighters.

Scholar Recounts Shootings

BK2208150893 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 22 Aug 93

[Text] A prominent American scholar, Professor William Baker, has strongly condemned human rights violations in occupied Kashmir. In an interview with PTV Muzaffarabad correspondent Ayub Minhas, he called for according the right of self-determination to the people of Kashmir in accordance with the UN resolution.

[Begin Baker recording] There was shooting everyday, everyday that I was in occupied Kashmir, and I went to Baramula, I went to Gandarbal, I was all over the area. And everywhere I went, there were massive numbers of Indian soldiers and troops, the Black Cats [commandos], the Border Security Forces, all of them. And everyday there was shooting, everyday there was killing of innocent Kashmiri civilians, every single day. This is why, India, of course, does not, and will not, unless they are finally pressured to do so, they will not allow any human rights organizations—Amnesty International, International Red Cross—none of these organizations will be allowed in to occupied Kashmir. Because it will be obvious. They could not shoot in open daylight, arrest, beat, torture, rape as they continue to do with these observers. And also, kidneys [are] being removed from normally healthy Kashmiris and those kidneys being sold in the black market in India. This is outrageous. This is why they, at all cost, are keeping its seal [as heard]. But I am afraid, and alhamdolillah—thank God—time is against them. So, you know, I think, for their own survival, the Indian Government is going to have to rethink this whole policy and the very best thing they could do is immediately withdraw and allow the plebiscite in the freedom of choice for self-determination of the Kashmiri people. [end recording]

Afghanistan's Hekmatyar Addresses Newsmen in Peshawar

BK2408145093 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 24 Aug 93

[Text] The prime minister of Afghanistan, Engineer Golboddin Hekmatyar, has said Afghan people are trying to usher in a new era of peace and tranquility in Afghanistan to make the war-torn country a true Islamic, prosperous, and economically viable state. Addressing a news conference in Peshawar today at the end of a 10-day official visit of Pakistan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia, Prime Minister Engineer Hekmatyar said the three brotherly countries have assured their full support to achieve this end. He said we are trying to establish a strong economic block of the three brotherly countries in order to achieve economic self-reliance. The Afghan prime minister said the Government of Pakistan will provide assistance for reconstruction of the damaged communications infrastructure in Afghanistan. Besides, Pakistan has also agreed to revive the historic trade route between the two countries and construction of new link roads with the Central Asian States.

Indian Naval Expansion Poses 'Serious Challenge'

BK2408142593 Rawalpindi JANG in Urdu 24 Aug 93 p 10

[Editorial: "The Need To Strengthen the Pakistan Navy"]

[Text] Caretaker Prime Minister Moin Qureshi attended an important meeting at the naval headquarters the other day during which he was briefed on the Pakistan Navy's preparations, needs and other important matters. A number of important decisions were taken during the meeting to make the Pakistan Navy more strong and active. The caretaker prime minister promised that urgent steps will be taken to provide funds to meet the Navy's requirements. One cannot deny that the Pakistan Navy needs to take urgent and effective steps to overcome the serious challenge posed to it by India's aggressive designs and unusual expansion of its Navy.

Unfortunately, the Navy in Pakistan has never been given the importance which it should have been. On the contrary, India is equipping its Navy with the latest ships and technology under a long-term plan. India's naval strength has increased so much that other countries in the region have started expressing concern about it. Indian experts, bolstered by India's self-confidence, often threaten laying a naval blockade around Pakistan in the event of war. India is Pakistan's eternal enemy, and its dangerous preparations for war are in fact aimed against Pakistan. Therefore, we cannot afford to tolerate any complacency and negligence.

Nevertheless, it is gratifying that the Pakistan Navy has taken effective steps in view of this situation, notably the construction of a port in Balochistan, purchase of British naval vessels to replace the U.S. ships, and the efforts to acquire submarines from France, Sweden and China. At the local level also, the industry for manufacturing equipment for the Pakistan Navy is being developed. In view of the danger posed by Indian naval strength and the future strategic necessities, we have to accelerate the efforts to equip the Pakistan Navy with modern weapons, and no complacency should be entertained in this regard.

President Reaffirms Interim Government's Economic Plans

BK2408162493 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 24 Aug 93

[Text] The acting president, Mr. Wasim Sajjad, has said that the economic stability is the top priority of the caretaker government, second only to the holding of free, fair, and impartial elections in the country. He was

speaking at the awards distribution ceremony of the Karachi Stock Exchange [KSE] in Karachi today.

[Begin Sajjad recording] Here I would like to assure you that the present caretaker setup is determined to encourage and consolidate the positive economic trends to strengthen them and to remove whatever structural imbalances stand in the way of their further growth. Economic stability is our top priority, second only to holding free, fair, and impartial elections. The time available to the government is short, but even in this short time, the government is determined to do whatever is possible to provide a sound base to our economy. [end recording]

Mr. Wasim Sajjad said that far-reaching measures have been introduced in Pakistan to encourage private initiative. He commended the performance of the Karachi Stock Exchange, saying that it was a matter of great satisfaction for all of us that during the last few years, the KSE has been able to play a pivotal role in the country's economic development. He called upon the KSE to evolve a strategy and ensure that brokers give a fair deal to small investors. Earlier, the president of the KSE, Mr. Arif Habib, said that the KSE is in the process of building a firm and sophisticated modern capital market for the 21st century.

Later, the acting president distributed the top company awards among the first 25 companies listed with the stock exchange. During the year 1991-92 and up to 30 June 1993, a total of 165 new companies have been listed, representing a total paid-up capital of 32 billion rupees. More than 16 billion rupees were contributed by the general public, which demonstrates the people's growing confidence in the country's economy. Over 4 billion rupees were mobilized by way of rights shares, and bonus shares of more than 1 billion rupees were also given to the shareholders. On this occasion, the international emblem of the stock market was presented to the acting president.